

Forest Song

*commissioned by Choirs Aotearoa
for the National Choral Academy Massed Choir*

Rosa Elliott

Programme Note:

Forest Song is an ode of gratitude to Aotearoa's native environment. It speaks of the beauty of the deeply reciprocal relationship between the land and its people. It is perhaps this interconnectedness that often makes us feel relaxed, peaceful and at home in nature. The piece is a reminder of our co-dependency with nature and the importance of appreciating and protecting it.

Text:

When I came to your shore
I touched an unknown soil
and felt ancient roots crawl beneath my feet.

I placed my ear upon damp ground
and heard my own heart-beat pound
as earth's great silence listened back.

I pressed my nose against a kauri tree
inhaling, exchanging breath
with the Lord of the Forest.

Now this land is in my every breath,
these trees are my lungs.

Additional text:

Ngahere forest

The remaining Māori and Latin words used throughout are the names of native New Zealand plants and trees.

Performer Note:

When an instruction is given to improvise "at free rhythm or tempi as dictated by breath," this indicates that the performer should sing/chant/whisper using the patterns of their natural breath. The individuals involuntary need to inhale or exhale should dictate their improvisation of the corresponding material.

Forest Song

$\text{♩} = 76$ *meditative, with warmth*

Rosa Elliott

through the nose
inhale exhale

Pitched hum
p

Soprano 1

through the nose
inhale exhale

Ng _____
inhale
p

Alto 1

through the nose
inhale exhale

[a]
inhale
p

Tenor 1

through the nose
inhale exhale

[a]
inhale
p

Bass 1

[a]

inhale exhale

Soprano 2

inhale exhale

[a]

Alto 2

[a]

inhale exhale

Tenor 2

[a]

inhale exhale

Bass 2

[a]

inhale exhale

Soprano 3

[a]

inhale exhale

Alto 3

[a]

inhale exhale

Tenor 3

[a]

inhale exhale

Bass 3

[a]

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The image shows a musical score for a vocal ensemble, consisting of eight staves. The staves are labeled on the left as S. 2, A. 2, T. 2, B. 2, S. 3, A. 3, T. 3, and B. 3. A large, bold, red watermark reading "SAMPLE" is superimposed over the first four staves. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p* (piano). Above the notes, there are instructions for breath control: "inhale" and "exhale" with arrows indicating the direction of the breath. Some staves also include the instruction "Pitched hum". Below the notes, there are phonetic symbols in brackets: [ɔ], [a], and [u]. The text "a niente" appears above the notes on staves S. 3 and A. 3. At the bottom of the page, there is a footnote: "*Pronounced as the separate syllables of 'ngahere'".

S. 2
[ɔ]
Pitched hum
g

A. 2
g

T. 2
[ɔ]
he*

B. 2
[ɔ]
he*

S. 3
Pitched hum
a niente
Ng

A. 3
Pitched hum
a niente
Ng

T. 3
inhale exhale - like a gust of wind
[a] [u]

B. 3
inhale exhale - like a gust of wind
[a] [u]

*Pronounced as the separate syllables of 'ngahere'

4 18

S. 1 a niente *p* inhale exhale *p* Nga*

A. 1 a niente *p* inhale exhale *p* **pp** Nga* kawakawa/makomako/horopito/rātā**

T. 1 a niente *p* inhale exhale *p* Nga*

B. 1 a niente *p* inhale exhale *p* Nga*

S. 2 a niente

T. 2 a niente *p* inhale exhale [a] a niente *p* inhale exhale [a]

B. 2 a niente *p* inhale exhale [a]

S. 3 *p* a niente

A. 3 *p* re* a niente

T. 3 *p* re* a niente

B. 3 *p* re* a niente

SAMPLE

**Each singer should choose one of the provided words and chant it at free rhythm as dictated by breath on the given pitch.

Section left intentionally blank

The image shows a musical score for a choir with six parts: Soprano 2 (S. 2), Tenor 2 (T. 2), Bass 2 (B. 2), Soprano 3 (S. 3), Alto 3 (A. 3), Tenor 3 (T. 3), and Bass 3 (B. 3). The score is in a common time signature and features a large red watermark reading "SAMPLE" across the center. The lyrics for S. 2, T. 2, and B. 2 are "he*", while S. 3, A. 3, T. 3, and B. 3 have "re*". The B. 2 part includes a dynamic marking of *pp* and a box containing the words "(kamahi/kaikawaka/tarata/pūiri)**". The S. 3, A. 3, T. 3, and B. 3 parts have dynamic markings of *p* and a slur over the final note. The B. 2 part has a slur over the first two notes and a box over the third note. The S. 2, T. 2, and B. 2 parts have a slur over the first two notes. The S. 3, A. 3, T. 3, and B. 3 parts have a slur over the final note. The B. 2 part has a slur over the first two notes and a box over the third note. The S. 3, A. 3, T. 3, and B. 3 parts have a slur over the final note.

S. 2
he*

T. 2
he*

B. 2
he* *pp*
(kamahi/kaikawaka/tarata/pūiri)**

S. 3
re*

A. 3
re*

T. 3
re*

B. 3
re*

**Each singer should choose one of the provided words and chant it at free rhythm as dictated by breath on the given pitch.

6 27

S. 1 *mp*
 came _____ When I came to your shore I touched an un-known soil _____

A. 1 *a niente* *pp*
 _____ au-stra - lis*

T. 1 _____

B. 1 _____

S. 2 *a niente* *p* *pp* *pp*
 _____ When I came _____ ex - cel - sum*

A. 2 *a niente* _____

T. 2 *a niente* _____

B. 2 _____

S. 3 *pp* *pp*
 _____ ex - cel - sum*

A. 3 *pp*

 (kowhai / kahikatea / tōwai / mingimingi)**

T. 3 *pp* *pp*
 _____ a - ga - this*

B. 3 *pp*

SAMPLE

*Repeat the boxed melodic idea at free rhythm and tempi as dictated by breath.

Section left intentionally blank

The image shows a musical score for a section that is mostly blank, with a large red "SAMPLE" watermark overlaid. The score is organized into systems for different parts: Soprano 2 (S.2), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), Bass 2 (B.2), Soprano 3 (S.3), Alto 3 (A.3), Tenor 3 (T.3), and Bass 3 (B.3). The lyrics are in Māori. The watermark "SAMPLE" is written in large, bold, red capital letters across the center of the page, partially obscuring the musical notation.

S. 2 _____ →

A. *pp* *pp* _____ →

T. *pp* *pp* _____ → *p* *p* _____

B. 2 _____ → *(kamahi/kaikawaka/tarata/pūiri)***

S. 3 _____ → *p* *p* _____

A. 3 *pp* *pp* _____ → *p* *p* _____

T. 3 _____ → *p* *p* _____

B. 3 *pp* *pp* _____ → *p* *p* _____

S. 1 *mp* *p*
ground

A. 1 *mp* *pp* *mp* *p*
I placed my ear u - pon damp ground ground

T. 1 *p* *pp* *mp* *p*
damp ground ground

B. 1 *p* *pp* *mp* *p*
damp ground ground

S. 2 *p*
ng

A. 2 *mp* *p*
I plac my ear u - pon damp ground

T. 2 *pp*
damp ground

B. 2 *p* *pp* *p*
damp ground and heard my own heart beat

S. 3 *mp* *p*
my ear u-pon damp

A. 3 *mp* *p*
my ear u-pon damp

T. 3 *mp* *p*
damp

B. 3 *mp* *p* *p*
damp and heard my own heart beat

SAMPLE

Section left intentionally blank

p heart-beat pound _____ *mp* u - pon damp ground _____ *p* as earth's great si - lence

p heart - po _____ *mp* - p damp ground _____ *p* as earth's great si - lence

p heart-beat pound _____ *mp* u - pon damp ground _____

mp pound _____ u - pon damp ground _____

p heart - beat heart - beat pound _____ *p* as earth's great si - lence

p heart - beat heart - beat pound _____ *pp* as earth's great si - lence

p heart - beat heart - beat pound _____

p pound _____ heart - beat heart - beat pound _____

63 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp*

S. 1 list-ened, list-ened, list - ened, list-ened back, back

A. 1 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp*

list-ened, list-ened, list-ened back

T. 1 *pp* *whispered* *mf*

aristotelia serrata/podocarpus totara*

B. 1 *p* *whispered* *mf*

piper excelsum/vitex lucens*

S. 2 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp*

list-ened, list-ened, list-ened back, back

A. 2 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp*

list-ened list-ened, back

T. 2 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp*

List - en back

B. 2 *mf* *f* *mp* *pp*

List - en back

S. 3 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp*

list-ened list-ened, list-ened back

A. 3 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp* *stagger breath*

list-ened list-ened back ng

T. 3 *mp* *f* *mp* *pp*

List - en back

B. 3 *mf* *f* *mp* *pp*

List - en back

SAMPLE

**Each singer should choose one of the provided words and whisper it at free rhythm as dictated by breath. Emphasise sibilant sounds.

Section left intentionally blank

SAMPLE

SAMPLE

S. 2 *mp* in - ha - ling,

T. 3 *mp* in - ha - ling, ex - cl in - ha - ling,

A. 3 *p* stagger breath ng

S. 3 *mp* in - ha -

B. 2 *mp* inhale exhale - like a gust a wind [a] [u] *mp* inhale exhale - like a gust a wind [a] [u]

B. 3 *mp* inhale exhale - like a gust a wind [a] [u] *mp* inhale [a] [a]

S. 1 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex -

A. 1 *transition from 'ng' to 'oh'*

T. 1 *mf*
I

B. 1 *mf*
I pressed my nose a - gainst a kau - ri

S. 2 ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing,

A. in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing,

T. 2 *mf*
I

B. 2

S. 3 - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang

A. 3 *transition from 'ng' to 'oh'*

T. 3 *mf*
[u] I pressed my nose a - gainst a kau - ri
exhale - like a gust a wind

B. 3 [u]



Section left intentionally blank

S. 2
in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, in -

A.
in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang -

T.
pressed my nose a - gainst a kau - ri tree in -

B. 2
a kau - ri tree in -

S. 3
ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, ex - chang - ing, in - ha - ling, in -

A. 3
oh in -

T. 3
tree in - tree in -

B. 3
a kau - ri tree, in -

SAMPLE

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S. 1 *f*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest

A. 1 *f*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest

T. 1 *f*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest

B. 1 *f*
 ha - ling with the Lord of the Fo - rest

S. 2 *mf* *f*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest, Fo - rest

A. 2 *mf*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest, Fo - rest

T. 2 *mf*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest, Fo - rest

B. 2 *mf* *f*
 ha - ling with the Lord of the Fo - rest Fo - rest

S. 3 *f*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest,

A. 3 *mf*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest,

T. 3 *mf*
 ha - ling, ex - chang - ing breath with the Lord of the Fo - rest,

B. 3 *mf*
 ha - ling with the Lord of the Fo - rest,



Section left intentionally blank

Musical score for SATB choir. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Soprano 2 (S. 2), Alto (A.), Tenor 2 (T. 2), and Bass 2 (B. 2). The second system includes parts for Soprano 3 (S. 3), Alto (A. 3), Tenor 3 (T. 3), and Bass 3 (B. 3). Dynamics include *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *p inhale*, and *exhale*. Lyrics include "Fo - rest", "Now this land is in my", and "[a]".

S. 2
p

A.
mp
Now this land is in my

T. 2
p

B. 2
p

S. 3
mp *mf* *p* *mp*
Fo - rest Now this land is in my

A. 3
mp *mf* *p* *p inhale* *exhale*
Fo - rest, Fo - rest [a]

T. 3
mp *mf* *p* *mp*
Fo - rest Now this

B. 3
mp *mf* *p* *p inhale*
Fo - rest [a]

S. 1 *mp* Now this land_ is in my ev - 'ry breath *mf* *p*

A. 1 *mf* *p* *p* inhale exhale
land is in my ev - 'ry breath [o]

T. 1 exhale *mf*
Now this land_ is in my

B. 1 *mp* *mf* *p*
Now this land is in my ev - 'ry breath

S. 2 *p* inhale exhale
[o]

A. *mf* *p* inhale
ev breath [o]

T. 2 *mf*
Now this land is in my ev - 'ry breath

B. 2 *p* inhale exhale
[o]

S. 3 *mf* *p* *p* inhale exhale
ev - 'ry breath [a]

A. 3 *mp*
Now this land is in my ev - 'ry breath

T. 3 *mf* *p* inhale exhale
land is in my ev - 'ry breath [o]

B. 3 exhale *mp*
Now this land is in my breath.

SAMPLE

Section left intentionally blank

The image shows a musical score for a vocal ensemble, consisting of six staves. The lyrics are: "these trees are my lungs _____ these trees are my". The score includes dynamic markings (*mp*, *p*) and performance instructions (*delicately*, *inhale*, *exhale*). A large red watermark "SAMPLE" is overlaid across the center of the page.

S. 2 *mp* *delicately* *p* *p*
these trees are my lungs _____ these trees are my

A. 3 *mp* *delicately* *p*
trees are my lungs _____

T. 3 *mp* *delicately* *p* *p*
these trees are my lungs _____ these

B. 3 *p* *delicately* *p*
trees are my lungs _____

S. 3 *p* *inhale* *exhale* *mp* *delicately* *p* *p*
[a] these trees are my lungs _____ these

B. 2 *mp* *delicately* *p*
trees are my lungs _____

S. 1
 ng kawakawa/makomako/horopito**

A. 1
 ng

T. 1
 ng

B. 1
exhale
 [u]

S. 2
 lung ng

A. 2
 lung (kamahi/kaikaka/tearata)**

T. 2
 lung ng

B. 2
inhale p *exhale* *inhale p*
 [a] [u] [a]

S. 3
 trees are my lung ng

A. 3
p
 trees are my lung ng

T. 3
 trees are my lung ng

B. 3
inhale p *exhale* *whispered*
 [a] [u] coprosma proprinqua/metrosideros robusta*

SAMPLE

*Each singer should choose one of the provided words and whisper it at free rhythm as dictated by breath. Emphasise sibilant sounds.

**Each singer should choose one of the provided words and chant it at free rhythm as dictated by breath on the given pitch.

Section left intentionally blank

S. 2 continue hum until end

A

T. rata/pūiri/mingimīngi**

B. 2 exhale continue breath sounds until end in a natural breathing pattern (non-rhythmic)
[u]

S. 3 whispered
pseudowintera colorata/
myrtus bullata*

A. 3 continue hum until end

T. 3 (kowhai/kahikatea/tōwa)**

B. 3

A few individuals may create the sounds of native NZ birds or insects, fading out along with the choir. This should remain subtle within the texture of the choir.