

A B B I E B E T I N I S

BAR XIZAM
(UPWARD I RISE)

For SATB chorus, and s.a.t. soloists, a cappella

Commissioned by The Esoterics as part of the POLYPHONOS Young Composer Prize, 2007

*Premiered July 2007
The Esoterics; Eric Banks, founding director
Tacoma, Medina, Seattle, and West Seattle, WA*

Program Note:

Khwajeh Shams al-Din Muhammad Hâfez-e Shirazi (ca. 1320-1390) was born in Shiraz, Persia (Iran). He wrote nearly 400 lyric poems, called *ghazals*, and is the undisputed master of that particular poetic form. His writing is mystical and based on Sufism, a tradition of Islam that is associated both with the Sunni and Shi'a denominations, as well as other currents of Islam. This particular *ghazal*, excerpted a bit in this setting, is written on Hâfez's tombstone.

The music has a very specific structure, moving systematically from confinement to freedom. Each singer begins on a hum, which to me depicts confinement: the desire to create something (in this case sound) without the means to see it through (to open one's mouth). Each of the four voice parts begins to explore a very small musical interval and to gradually expand it. At each soloist's cry "Bar xizam!" another voice part is "freed" and joyfully begins to sing scales and glissandi, building into a whirling invocation to the Beloved.

So much of writing music is about studying things close-up. The exact articulations, dynamics, intricacies of text setting... But as I was wondering how best to set this magnificent text to music, I found myself stepping farther and farther back from the page. I began to search of a larger compositional gesture that could paint what I was starting to envision: whole crowds of people, through the centuries even, rising up – whether in the name of religion, social justice, personal healing – all, like Hâfez, longing for something better. So I studied up on the Shepard scale, the auditory illusion of a never-ending rising scale (not unlike M.C. Escher's famous staircase, or the endlessly rising stripes on a barber pole). In one part of this piece, I've tried to recreate that illusion by overlapping a few specific series of rising glissandi, hoping that it gives the impression of these countless souls in their continuous ascent.

This piece is dedicated, with much love, to my parents, John and Emily Betinis, who continue to teach me, by their example, how to rise up.

- Abbie Betinis, June 2007

Text and Translation

مژدهی وصل تو کو کزسر جان برخیزم

Waiting, where is the harmony of your voice, so that, free from the desires of this life: I might rise?

طاقر قدس مو از دام جهان برخیزم

I am a dove from paradise, but out of this worldly cage: I shall rise.

بولای تو که گرندی خیشم خانی از سر برخیزم

If, in your devotion, you call upon me to serve you, then I promise, from the desires of life and this world: I will rise.

یا رب از ابر هدایت برسان بارانی

O Lord, from the cloud of your grace, let your rain fall over and over,

پیشتر زانکه چو گردی زمیان برخیزم

Before this, from the midst of it all, like a handful of dust: Let me rise.

خیزو بالا بنما ای بت شیرین حرکات

O rise up, with sweet gesture, and show me your stature: lofty, like the cypress,

کزسر جانو برخیزم

So that, free from the desires of this life: I may rise.

رفشکان برخیزم

With dancing feet: I rise.

دست فشان برخیزم

With clapping hands: I rise

روز مرگ نفسي مهلت دیدار به

On the day that I die, in the span of a single breath, grant me but a glimpse of you,

تا چو حافظ زسر جانو جهان برخیزم

And then, like Hafez, free from the desires of life and this world: upward, I rise!

(Translated from Persian into English by Eric Banks and the composer, after renderings by Michael Boylan and H Wilberforce Clarke)

Commissioned by The Esoterics as part of the POLYPHONOS Young Composer Prize, 2007

Bar xizam

(Upward I rise)

Shams Hâfez-e Shirazi (14th c.)

Abbie Betinis

Meditatively ($\text{♩} = \text{ca.} 92$)

Soprano

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor

Bass

7

S

A

A 2

T

B

* All glissandi should begin and end on the beat written. For instance, here, there's a full beat to slide: begin sliding on bt. 2 and arrive on bt. 3.

Trans'n: *Waiting, where is the harmony of your voice...*

Betinis / Bar xizam

2

13

A. Solo

(crying out) *mf*

S

A

A 2

T

B

19

A. Solo

S

A

A 2

T

B

Trans'n: ...waiting, where is the harmony of your voice...

Betinis / Bar xizam

3

25

(mf)

A. Solo

S

A

A 2

T

B

le to ku mož de - ye vas - le to ku mož de - ye vas - le to ku mož de -
vas - - le to ku mož de - ye vas - - le to ku mož de - ye
Oh...
Oh...

30

A. Solo

S

A

A 2

T

T 2

B

re jon - bar - xi - zam? -
Oh...
ye - vas - - le to ku Oh...
vas - - le to ku Oh...
molto
p (barely open lips)
Ah... molto
p (barely open lips)
mož-de-ye vas - - - - le to ku mož-de-
mož-de - - - - ye vas - - le to ku mož-de-ye
Ah... molto
p
Oh...
Ah... (#)

Trans'n: ...so that, free from the desires of this life: I might rise?

Betinis / Bar xizam

4

35

Soprano (S): Kaz sa-re jon bar xi zam? Oh...

Alto (A): Kaz sa-re jon bar xi zam? Oh...

Alto 2 (A2): Kaz sa-re jon bar xi zam? Oh...

Tenor (T): ye vas - le to ku mož-de-ye vas - le to ku mož-de-ye vas - le to ku mož-de - ye vas - le to

Tenor 2 (T2): vas - le to ku mož-de-ye vas - le to ku mož-de - ye vas - le to ku mož-de-ye vas - le to ku

Bass (B): (Silent)

41

mf (Trapped, fluttering)

Soprano Solo (S. Solo): To ye-re, to yere, to ye - re qod - samo, toyere qod - samo,

Soprano (S): (Silent)

Alto (A): (Silent)

Alto 2 (A2): (Silent)

Tenor (T): cresc. poco a poco kaz sa-re jon bar ...

Tenor 2 (T2): cresc. poco a poco kaz sa-re jon bar ...

Bass (B): (Silent)

Trans'n: ...I am a dove from paradise... (Waiting, where is the harmony of your voice, so that, free from the desires of this life: I might rise?)

Betinis / Bar xizam

46

5

S. Solo S. A. A. 2 T. T. 2 B.

az - do - - - me ja-hon *bar - xizam.*

- xi - zam? *kaz sare jon* *kaz - - - sa re jan*

- - xi - zam? *kaz sare jon* *kaz - sa re*

ku mož de-ye vas - le to ku moždeye vas - le to ku *kaz-*

mož de-ye vas - le to ku možde - ye vas - le to ku

možde - ye vas - le to

52

S. A. A. 2 T. B. B. 2

bar - xi - zam... *kaz - sa re jan* *bar - xizam...*

jan bar - xi - zam... *kaz - sa re jan* *bar - xi -*

- - sa re jan bar - - - xi - zam... *kaz - - - sa re jan* *bar -*

ku mož de - ye vas - le to ku mož de - ye vas - le to ku mož de - ye vas - le to

ku mož de - ye vas - le to ku mož de - ye vas - le to ku mož de - ye vas -

Trans'n: ...but out of this worldly cage: I shall rise.... (Waiting, where is the harmony of your voice, so that, free from the desires of this life: I might rise?)

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Betinis / Bar xizam

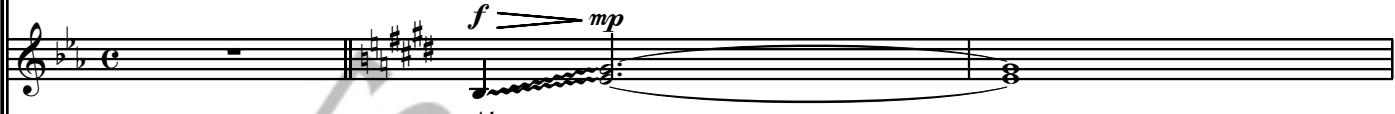
7

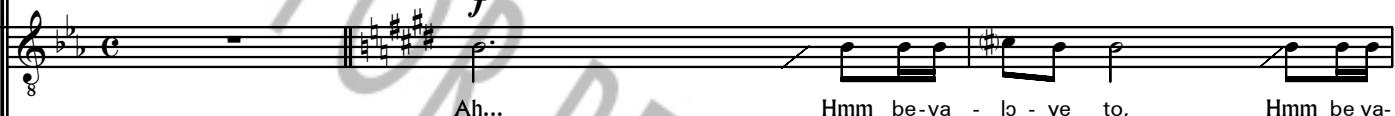
67

f

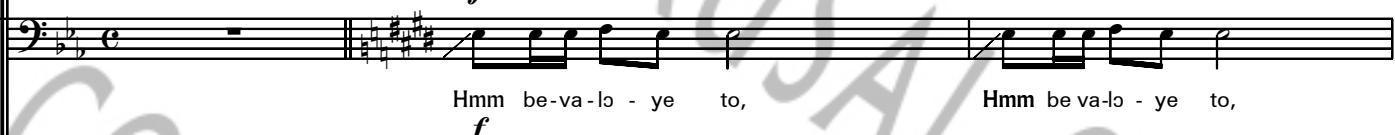
T. Solo 
bar - xi - zam.

S 
mož-de - ye vas - le to ku

A 
Ah...
f

T 
Ah...
Hmm be - va - lo - ye to, Hmm be va -

T 2 
Hmm _____ be - va - lo - ye to, Hmm be va - lo - ye to,

B 
Hmm be - va - lo - ye to, Hmm be va - lo - ye to,

B 2 
Hmm be - va - lo - ye to, Hmm be va - lo - ye to,

70

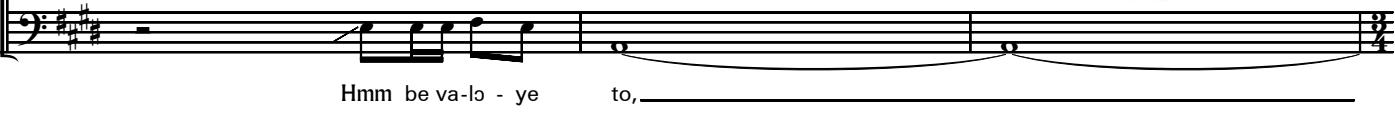
S 

A 
Ah...
3

T 
lo - ye to, Hmm be - va - lo - ye to, Hmm beva - lo - ye to, Hmm beva

T 2 
_____ Hmm be va - lo - ye to, Hmm bevalo - ye to, Hmm bevalo - ye to,

B 
_____ Hmm be - va - lo - ye to, Hmm bevalo - ye to, Hmm bevalo - ye to,

B 2 
_____ Hmm be va - lo - ye to, _____

Trans'n: ...I will rise. (...in your devotion, in your devotion...)

Betinis / Bar xizam

73

Slower ($\text{♩} = \text{ca.}80$)

73

Soprano (S) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "ku" (gradually change from "oo" to "ee") "Yo Rab! Yo rab, az" are written below the staff.

Soprano 2 (S 2) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "ku" (gradually change from "oo" to "ee") "Yo Rab! Yo rab, az" are written below the staff.

Alto (A) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "ku" (gradually change from "oo" to "ee") "Yo Rab! Yo rab, az" are written below the staff.

Alto 2 (A 2) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "ku" (gradually change from "oo" to "ee") "Yo Rab! Yo rab, az" are written below the staff.

Tenor (T) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "lo - ye to, Yo! Yo!" are written below the staff.

Tenor 2 (T 2) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "Hmm be va-lo-ye to, Yo! Yo!" are written below the staff.

Bass (B) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "Hmm beva - lo - ye to, Yo! Yo!" are written below the staff.

Bass 2 (B 2) vocal line with dynamic **f**. The lyrics "Yo! Yo!" are written below the staff.

77

F

S

S 2

A

A 2

Trans'n: *O Lord, from the cloud of your grace, let your rain fall over and over / Before this, from the midst of it all...*

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Betinis / Bar xizam

11

98

S. Solo

A. Solo

T. Solo

S

S 2

A

A 2

T

mp cresc. poco a poco

kaz — sa — re jan bar — xi — zam kaz — sa — re jan

repeat, ad lib.

T 2

mp cresc. poco a poco

kaz — sa — re sa — re jan kaz —

repeat, ad lib.

B

mp cresc. poco a poco

kaz — sa — re jan bar — xi — zam kaz — sa — re

repeat, ad lib.

B 2

mp cresc. poco a poco

kaz — sa — re jan bar — xi — zam kaz — sa — re

repeat, ad lib.

Trans'n: So that, free from the desires of this life...

Betinis / Bar xizam

12

(m. 103 = at least 30 seconds long. Repeat each cell ad lib.)

103

S. Solo *To ye-re, ___* *to ye re, to ye - re qod-sa mo,*

A. Solo *Mož - de - ye,* *mož - de-ye, vas - le to ku,*

T. Solo *Be va - lo ye,* *be va-lo - ye to, ___.*

S *mm...* *mm...* →

S 2 *mm...* →

A *mm...* →

A 2 *mm...* →

T *mm...* →

T 2 *sa-re jan - mm...* →

B *jan mm...* →

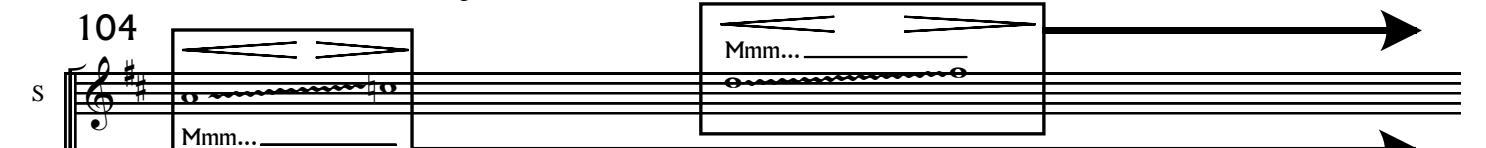
B 2 *mm...* →

Betinis / Bar xizam

13

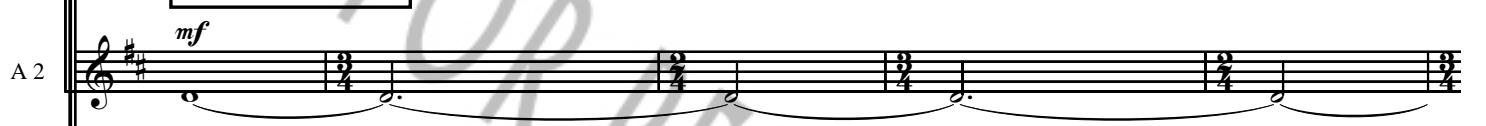
A Joyful, Dancing tempo ($\text{♩} > 104$)

104

S 

S 2 

A 

A 2 

T 

T 2 

B 

109

Accelerando

S 

S 2 

A 

A 2 

T 

B 

Trans'n: With dancing feet, with clapping hands, life and the world...

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Betinis / Bar xizam

15

Tempo Primo ($\text{♩} = \text{ca.} 92$)

121

Soprano (S): *Bar xi - zam!*

Alto (A): *Bar xi - zam!*

Tenor (T): *Bar xi - zam!*

Bass (B): *Bar xi - zam!*

127

Soprano (S): *Bar _____ xi - - - zam! _____*
Dynamics: molto, ff, (non decresc.)

Alto (A): *Bar _____ xi - - - zam! _____*
Dynamics: molto, ff, (non decresc.)

Tenor (T): *Bar _____ xi - zam! (mm) _____*
Dynamics: sfz, p

Bass (B): *Bar _____ xi - zam! (mm) _____*
Dynamics: sfz, p, pp

Trans'n: *I rise! I rise! I rise!*

132

Slower

p distantly

A musical score for soprano (S) in G major, 2/4 time. The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by a note on the second beat. The lyrics "Ru - ze mar - - - gam, _____ na - fa-" are written below the staff. The melody continues with notes and rests, ending with a long note on the eighth beat.

Slower

p distantly

A musical staff labeled 'A' at the beginning. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a common time signature. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a sixteenth note having a curved brace under it. There are several rests indicated by vertical dashes.

Slower

100

A musical score for the 'T' part, page 8, featuring five measures. The key signature is A major (no sharps or flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by 'C'). The vocal line consists of sustained notes: a half note on B4 in measure 1, a half note on C5 in measure 2, a half note on D5 in measure 3, a half note on E5 in measure 4, and a half note on F5 in measure 5. The vocal range is approximately from middle C to high G.

Slower

p distantly

B

Ruze mar - - - gam, _____ na - fa-

137

S. Solo

(very soft glissandi, on a hum)

A. Solo

(very soft glissandi, on a hum)

A musical score for 'T. Solo' on page 8. The score consists of seven measures of music for a single instrument. The key signature is A major (two sharps). Measure 1 starts with a treble clef, an A sharp, and a common time signature. Measures 2 through 6 are entirely blank, indicated by a single vertical bar line per measure. Measure 7 begins with a vertical bar line, followed by a short horizontal line, and then a diagonal line extending from the top right towards the bottom right, indicating a glissando or slide. The page number '8' is located at the bottom left of the staff.

A musical score for soprano (S) in G major (two sharps). The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by a dotted half note, a quarter note, and a eighth-note triplet. The lyrics 'si moh - la - te di - dor he - deb' are written below the notes. The melody continues with a sixteenth note, a eighth-note triplet, a quarter note, and a eighth-note triplet. The lyrics end with a final eighth note.

A musical score for a single melodic line. The key signature is A major (no sharps or flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by 'C'). The vocal line starts with a rest followed by a melodic phrase: 'moh - la - te di - dor be - deh...'. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a grace note preceding 'dor' and a sustained note under 'deh'.

A musical staff in treble clef and A major (three sharps) shows a continuous eighth-note pattern starting from the first note. The notes are connected by slurs and have a dotted rhythm. The staff begins with a quarter note followed by seven eighth notes. The eighth notes are grouped into pairs by vertical bar lines, with the first pair having a double bar line with repeat dots at the start. The eighth notes are also grouped by horizontal bar lines. The eighth notes are positioned on the first, third, and fifth lines of the staff.

The musical score continues from the previous page. The vocal parts are labeled 'B' and 'C'. The vocal line includes lyrics such as 'si', 'meh', 'la - te', 'di', 'dar', 'he', and 'deb'. The piano part is also present.

Trans'n: On the day that I die, in the span of a single breath, grant me but a glimpse of you...

Betinis / Bar xizam

17

145

S. Solo

A. Solo

T. Solo

S. Solo

A. Solo

T. Solo

B. Bass

S. Solo

A. Solo

T. Solo

S. Solo

A. Solo

T. Solo

B. Bass

(end)

poco

p

Bar_____ xi - - - zam! *close to (mm)*

poco

p

hon, Bar_____ xi - - - zam! *close to (mm)*

poco

p

Bar_____ xi - - - zam! *close to (mm)*

hon, Bar_____ xi - - - zam! *close to (mm)*

Trans'n: ...and then, like Hafez, free from the desires of life and this world: upward, I rise!

Selected Choral Works by Abbie Betinis:

Aililiú, ó Íosa	soprano, countertenor, SATB chorus, bodhran, gaelic harp, vielle	Abylon Press AB-036-00
Another Sky	SSA, marimba	Abylon Press AB-012-00
The Babe of Bethlehem (arr.)	SSAATTBB a cappella	Abylon Press AB-031-01
Blessed Be the Lord, My Rock	SAB a cappella/organ	Graphite Publishing GP-B004
Carmina mei cordis	SATB a cappella	Abylon Press AB-030-00
I. Aeterna lux divinitas		
II. Angele dei		
Dormi, Jesu	SATB a cappella	Abylon Press AB-007-00
Hail, Christmas Day! (a canon)	SATB (or SAB) a cappella	Abylon Press AB-026-C3
In a Far Judean City	SATB a cappella	Abylon Press AB-009-C1
Jerusalem Luminosa	SA a cappella	Kjos Cat. No. 6323
The Piper's Son	SA children's choir, flute	Abylon Press AB-014-00
Prayer for Peace	SATB a cappella, soprano solo	Abylon Press AB-033-C4
Psalm 126 – A Song of Ascents	SATB a cappella	Augsburg Fortress 0-8006-7720
To the Evening Star	SSAATTBB, flute	Abylon Press AB-040-00
Toward Sunshine, Toward Freedom	SATB a cappella, soprano solo	Abylon Press AB-035-01
I. The Bees' Song		
II. A noiseless patient spider		
III. Envoi		
Yhinx: An Ancient Greek Love Charm	TTBB a cappella, TTB soli	Abylon Press AB-018-01

ABBIE BETINIS (b. 1980) has written music in a variety of genres, but her greatest passion is for the human voice, as evidenced by her continually expanding catalogue of works for solo, chamber, and mixed vocal ensembles. Since graduating from St. Olaf College in 2001, she has received over thirty commissions for new work, from organizations such as the American Suzuki Foundation, Cantus, the Dale Warland Singers, Ensemble of the North, Kantorei (Denver, CO), The Rose Ensemble, The Schubert Club, and the University of Minnesota Men's Choir. Betinis has spent two summers on scholarship from the European American Musical Alliance at La Schola Cantorum and the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, France, where she studied harmony and counterpoint in the tradition of Nadia Boulanger with faculty from Juilliard and the Paris Conservatory. Originally from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, she now lives in Minneapolis, where she is completing her Master of Arts degree in music composition at the University of Minnesota, and working as a freelance singer, music copyist, and web designer. In September 2005, she was named a composer-in-residence for The Schubert Club in Saint Paul, MN.