CME Gospel Music Experience

Total Praise

Richard Smallwood
arranged by Doreen Rao

Doreen Rao's choral music experience

BOOSEY & HAWKES

DISTRIBUTED BY HAL LEONARD
PROGRAM NOTE

At the forefront of Chicago life since its early beginnings at the Pilgrim Baptist Church, “Gospel” was so named in the 1930s by Thomas A. Dorsey, a blues pianist and composer who blended church spirituals with the fiery power of rhythm and blues.

Richard Smallwood’s Total Praise is an American classic known throughout the Gospel music community and beyond—a perfect example of “the good news” defined by the use of reflective text, lyrical melody and simple harmonic structure. I had the great pleasure of working with Rev. Smallwood at the 1997 CME Institute for Choral Teacher Education in Chicago. As our CME composer-in-residence, Richard enchanted conductors and choristers alike with his pianistic virtuosity. He taught us several of his original compositions, including his unforgettable Total Praise.

In the words of Rev. Smallwood:

“I never try to make my music sound any particular way. I’m known for Gospel with a classical touch, but traditional Gospel has also been very much of an influence. It’s been both a tremendous inspiration—spirit, heart and soul—as well as a strong musical foundation. I believe that one reason my songs seem to transcend age barriers. They are contemporary without losing that traditional feel. I want to make music that will linger and have a lasting effect—one that will lift burdens and change lives...and heal—long after I’ve gone on.”

—Doreen Rao

TEXT

Lord, I will lift mine eyes to the hills,
Knowing my help is coming from You.
Your peace, You give me in time of the storm.
You are the source of my strength,
You are the strength of my life.
I lift my hands in total praise to You.
Amen.

—Richard Smallwood

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Born in Atlanta, Georgia, Richard Smallwood graduated with honors from Howard University as an accomplished musician and pianist, then working in Washington DC with his five-voice Richard Smallwood Singers and the Walter Hawkins family. Richard’s music is not confined to any single artistic genre. His accolades have spanned the range of contemporary culture ministering to presidents and dignitaries all over the globe. The Smithsonian Institution honored Rev. Smallwood for his singular cultural contributions. Richard completed his Masters of Divinity at Howard University’s School of Divinity and was Ordained in 2004. On November 14, 2006, Richard joined the ranks of a select few when he was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame by the prestigious Gospel Music Association (GMA), placing him in the company of some of the greatest artists ever to perform sacred music, among them Elvis Presley, Mahalia Jackson, Andrae Crouch, and Thomas A. Dorsey.

PERFORMANCE TIME

ca. 2 min. 40 sec.

EDUCATION THROUGH ARTISTRY

Gospel music is one of the great American singing traditions. From neighborhood churches and praise meetings to school auditoriums and concert stages, the Gospel music traditions are beloved worldwide for their power to move, inspire and engage the spirit through song.

The CME Gospel Music Experience series will curate a spectrum of compositions and arrangements in the Gospel tradition advised by my colleagues Walter Whitman, Jr. and Dr. Eugene Rogers. “GME” includes compositions and arrangements in the traditional and contemporary styles of Gospel alongside European classics arranged in the Gospel style.

Gospel singing is most often shared in the aural tradition, from singer to singer, from song leaders and recordings. These editions are noted as guidelines for reading and interpretation. They are also appropriate for festivals that encourage an introduction to this uniquely American style to those unfamiliar with the tradition. GME choral octavos can never replace the quality of experience that comes from those leaders brought up in this extraordinary tradition. How each song is interpreted depends on those who are singing.

From unison to traditional three-part voicings with interchangeable alto-tenor-bass parts, GME is perfect for church, school and community singing at every level of ability. The octavos will often include bass and drum parts at the back of the edition.
TOTAL PRAISE
for SATB Chorus & Piano

Arranged by
Patrick Barrett & Doreen Rao

Words & Music by
Richard Smallwood

Slowly \( \frac{3}{4} = 60 \)

Lord, I will

Lord, I will

Lord, I will

Slowly \( \frac{3}{4} = 60 \)

Lord, I will

Piano

lift mine eyes to the hills,

lift mine eyes to the hills,

lift mine eyes to the hills,

lift mine eyes to the hills,

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Knowing my help is coming from You.

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Your peace, You give me in time of the
You are the source of my strength,
You are the strength of my life,
You are the strength of my life,
You are the strength of my life,
You are the strength of my life,
You are the strength of my life,
hands in total praise to You.

You. Amen.

Amen, Amen, Amen.