

HIGH FLIGHT, Farnell
SBMP 1838

SAB/Three-Part Mixed
piano

High Flight

poem by

**John G. Magee, Jr.
& Mathilde Blind, alt.**

music by

Laura Farnell



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About the composer

Laura Farnell (b. 1975) has a passion for making music with singers, working with educators, and creating accessible and artistic choral compositions. After graduating summa cum laude from Baylor University (Waco, TX) with her BME in Choral Music (with a piano emphasis), Laura taught elementary music for two years in Mansfield ISD, followed by eight years of JH choir in Arlington ISD. She was honored by her schools with Teacher of the Year awards in 2000 and 2003, and she received an Excellence in Education Award in 2004 as the Arlington ISD's outstanding junior high teacher of the year.

Laura presently lives in Arlington, Texas, and serves as an invited music conference presenter, as well as choral clinician for district, region, and state honor choirs across the country. As a composer, she especially enjoys writing and arranging music for developing choirs and is represented by several music publishing companies. She has more than one hundred choral compositions in publication, including many commissioned pieces and a co-authored beginning sightsinging method book. She and her husband, Russell, and their two sons, attend First Presbyterian Church of Arlington where Russell serves as Minister of Music and Laura directs the children's and youth choirs.

Composer Notes

Most of the text for this piece is based on the poem "High Flight" written by an American World War 2 pilot, John Magee. During his training, he wrote a letter to his parents, which included this poem that he wrote in his mind while he was flying his plane. A few months later, he was tragically killed in a plane collision during a training exercise at age 19.

The poem became well-known again after the U.S. space shuttle, Challenger, exploded just 73 seconds into its flight on January 28, 1986, killing its 7 crew members. In President Ronald Reagan's address consoling the nation, he quoted the first and last lines of the poem.

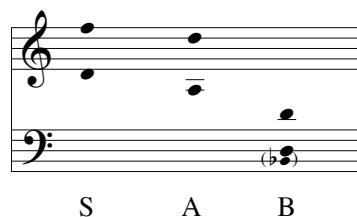
"The crew of the space shuttle Challenger honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives. We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their journey and waved goodbye and 'slipped the surly bonds of earth' to 'touch the face of God.'"

The text for the slower, middle section of the piece is taken from lines of Mathilde Blind's poem, "The Ascent of Man - Prelude: Wings". This poem describes how one's soul can rise above struggle and pain through beauty, nature, and music, ascending as if in flight. In one sense, this musical composition depicts a literal flight, as described by Magee. However, in another sense the words and music of this piece capture the idea of a figurative flight in which the soul of the singer soars above the struggle and pain of life through music.

Poem

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
of sun-split clouds,—and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air
Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark nor ever eagle flew—
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

Ranges



recording and rehearsal tracks available at sbmp.com

♩ = c. 116
8va

Piano *p*

pedal harmonically

4 *(8va)* *mp*

7 *poco rit.* *cresc.* *a tempo* *mf*

9 *mf*

S
A

Fly, fly, fly, Fly, fly, fly!

B

Fly, fly, fly, Fly, fly, fly!

15

Fly, fly, fly!

Fly, fly, fly!

The musical score for 'Fly, fly, fly!' is presented in three systems. The first system features a vocal melody in treble clef and a bass line in bass clef, both in 2/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes and half notes, with lyrics 'Fly, fly, fly!' and a final measure with a whole note rest. The second system continues the vocal melody and bass line. The third system shows a more complex piano accompaniment with sixteenth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. A large 'PREVIEW' watermark is overlaid diagonally across the entire page.

18

mf I have

mf I have

21

S
chased the wind And danced the sky,

A
chased the wind And danced the sky,

B

24

On - vered wings to the

mp
I have danced the sky, laugh - ter sil - vered

mp
I have danced the sky, laugh - ter sil - vered

27

sun I've climbed. And with the clouds in

mf

sun I've climbed. And with the clouds in

mf

sun I've climbed. And with the clouds in

30

tum - bl - ing mirth, I have slipped the sur - ly bonds of earth.

cresc.

tum - bl - ing mirth, have slipped the sur - ly bonds of earth.

cresc.

tum - bl - ing mirth, I have slipped the sur - ly bonds of earth.

cresc.

tum - bl - ing mirth, I have slipped the sur - ly bonds of earth.

cresc.

*Either or both notes may be performed at divisi.
**Merriment or gladness
***“Surlly” means “unfriendly” or “threatening.” The phrase “slipped the surly bonds of earth” in this case means to become free from earth’s gravity, as well as the weight of earth’s burdens.

33

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f

3

3

3

3

36

a tempo

mf

fly!

Up, up — the long and burn - ing

mf

fly!

Up, up — the long and burn - ing

fly!

a tempo

mf

3

3

3

3

40

blue, _____

blue, _____ the blue,

mf Where nev - er

43

mf nor ea - gle ev - er flew,

lark nor ea - gle ev - er flew,

PREVIEW

46

dim. *p* *rit.*

Hov - er - ing in the si - lence,

dim. *p*

Hov - er - ing in the sun - lit si - lence.

dim. *p*

Hov - er - ing in the si - lence.

dim. *rit.*

48 *pp* *p*

si - lence. As -

pp *p*

8va *pp* *p*

88-92

88-92

*Either or both notes may be performed at divisi.

51

cend, oh my soul, _____ with the wings of the lark as -

p

As - cend, oh my soul, with the wings of the lark as -

54

cend. _____

p *cresc.*

As - cend, oh my soul, on the

p *cresc.*

As - cend, oh my soul, _____ on the

*Either or both notes may be performed at divisi.

57

mp *cresc.* 3

As - cend, oh my soul, _____

mf 3 3

wings of the wind as it blows. on the

mf 3 3

wings of the wind as it blows. on the

60

mf *accel.* *cresc.*

Up from the strug-gle and pain, reach-ing to rise and reach-ing to

mf *cresc.* 3

wings of a song, Up from the strug-gle and pain, reach-ing to rise and reach-ing to

mf *cresc.* 3 *

wings of a song, Reach-ing to rise and reach-ing to

mf *accel.* *cresc.* 3

wings of a song, Reach-ing to rise and reach-ing to

*Either or both notes may be performed at divisi.

63 $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 116$ *f*

fly _____ a - gain! fly, _____

fly Fly, fly, _____ fly, _____

fly, Fly, fly, _____ fly, _____

66 $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 116$ *f*

Fly, fly, _____ I will fly, fly, _____ fly, _____

Fly, fly, _____ fly! _____ I will Fly, fly, _____ fly, _____

Fly, fly, _____ fly! _____ Fly, fly, _____ fly, _____

PREVIEW

69

Fly, fly, fly! *f* I have

Fly, fly, fly! *f* I have

Fly, fly, fly!

72

Chased the wind! And danced the sky,

chased the wind And danced the sky,

chased the wind And danced the sky,

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75 I have danced the sky. Sil - vered wings,

On sil - vered wings to the

mf I have danced the sky, laugh - ter sil - vered

mf I have danced the sky, laugh - ter sil - vered

78 to the sun I've climbed. in

sun I've climbed. And with the clouds in

f sun I've climbed. And with the clouds in

f sun I've climbed. And with the clouds in

*Either or both notes may be performed at divisi.

81

tum - bl - ing mirth, I have slipped the sur - ly bonds of earth.

tum - bl - ing mirth, I have slipped the sur - ly bonds of earth.

tum - bl - ing mirth, I have slipped the sur - ly bonds of earth.

84

High - er and high - er And with these wings I

High - er and high - er am I. And with these wings I

High - er and high - er am I. And with these wings I

poco rit.

poco rit.

*Either or both parts may be performed at divisi.

87 $\text{♩} = 108$

cresc.

fly! fly! And with these

cresc.

fly! fly! And with these

cresc.

fly! fly! And with these

$\text{♩} = 108$

cresc.

90 *poco rit.*

fly!

wings I rise and I rise and fly! _____

wings I rise and I rise and fly! _____

wings I rise and I rise and fly! _____

poco rit.

