ABBIE BETINIS

A Blessing of Cranes

SSAA chorus, piano

Lyrics by Michael Dennis Browne

ABBIE BETINIS
MUSIC COMPANY

abbiebetinis.com

The 2014 Women's Choir Commission Consortium of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA):

Aria, Monterey	Sean Boulware, Conductor
Aurora Chorus	Joan Szymko, Artistic Director
Bella Voce Women's Ensemble	Jennifer Tibben, Conductor
Bonneville HS Bel Cantos	Steve Dresen, Conductor
California Lutheran University Women's Chorale	Wyant Morton, Conductor
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Spirito!	Molly Lindberg, Conductor
The Girl Choir of South Florida	Wallis Peterson, Conductor
The Ohio State University Women's Glee Club	Kristina MacMullen, Conductor
University of Mississippi Women's Glee Club	Debra Spurgeon, Conductor
University of Missouri Women's Chorale, Columbia MO	Elizabeth Hogan McFarland, Conductor
University of Southern California Oriana Women's Choir	Jo-Michael Scheibe, Conductor
Vox Femina Los Angeles	Iris S. Levine, Artistic Director
Wellesley College Choir	Lisa Graham, Conductor
West Ottawa High School Select Women's Ensemble	Pam Pierson, Conductor
WomanSong (West Virginia)	Emily Capece, Conductor
WomenSing	Martin Benvenuto, Artistic Director

PROGRAM NOTE:

In August 1945, the atomic bomb that devastated Hiroshima, Japan, blew two-year-old Sadako Sasaki out her window. She miraculously survived, but, by age 12, began to show signs of leukemia, caused by radiation from the bomb. When her friend Chizuko visited her in the hospital, she brought her a gold piece of paper folded into a paper crane using the Japanese art of origami. A Japanese legend promises a wish granted to the person who folds a thousand cranes, so when Sadako saw the crane, she had an idea, saying: *"I will write peace on your wings, and you will fly all over the world."* She folded over 1,300 cranes from her hospital bed, and wished for no more war. She died later that year, but her statue stands today, holding an origami crane – now a worldwide symbol of peace – at the Children's Peace Monument in Hiroshima. Colorful "Senbazuru" (a thousand cranes tied together) hang nearby, sent by people all around the world.

When I realized there would be 1,000 singers as part of this special commission, I hoped each singer would fold a crane, so together we could advance Sadako's wish for peace. Then I thought: what if each choir could "sing a crane" into existence musically, every time they perform the song? Could I compose the piece so the notes fold together and recombine into something else, just like the paper crane does? I started experimenting with the crane pattern, creasing and folding the paper – trying to figure out how to render this beautiful, meditative, and geometric activity into sound. Finally, by mapping each part of the paper crane to a different note on the musical staff, I realized I could make a kind of "aural origami," and transform the whole folding process into sound. I brought my cranes and sketches to my friend, poet Michael Dennis Browne, wondering if this idea inspired him too, and I'm so grateful that it did. I hope together we've done justice to Sadako's legacy, with this song about dreaming, working, healing, and – finally – giving all of that in love to the world.

At the end of this score, you'll find an origami pattern for you to cut out and fold into your own paper crane. I designed this pattern so you can watch the melodies take shape as you fold. I hope you enjoy the process of transforming this little flat square into a worldwide symbol of peace, and – likewise – of transforming this silent score into sound.   *~ Abbie*

A Blessing of Cranes

How do we love you more than to shape you?
Turning so firmly in the shadows of fingers.
How do we love you more than to let you go?

Waves of earth's oceans, waves of our willing hands
Creasing and folding, creasing and folding, unfolding.
How do we love you more than to shape you?

Never a thought of thinking, only this weaving,
These thousands of wings we make to carry our longing;
How do we love you more than to let you go?

No trembling before the task, simply this sweetness,
Freedom from fear, receiving this heartbeat, receiving.
How do we love you more than to shape you?

Blossoms that shimmer and gather about their branches,
Returning to earth her peace, her original blessing;
How do we love you more than to let you go?

Deeper than dream to say, even than singing,
Releasing the wishes we have, the asking for healing;
How do we ever love you more than to shape you?
How do we love you more than to let you go?

<div align="right">

Michael Dennis Browne

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Poet **Michael Dennis Browne**, originally from England, is a professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota, where he taught for thirty-nine years, served a term as director of the creative writing program, and was a member of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers. Browne's poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies, and his awards include fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Bush Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, and the Minnesota Book Award for poetry. His many composer collaborators include Stephen Paulus, Carolyn Jennings, Juliana Hall, Timothy Takach, Abbie Betinis, and Craig Hella Johnson.

Composer **Abbie Betinis** creates "inventive" (*The New York Times*), "joyful… incandescent" (*Boston Globe*) music that "expands into ethereal realms" (*Cambridge University Press*). With performances from Carnegie Hall to Disney Hall, state prisons to capitol buildings, international cathedrals to intimate summer campfires, her music transports performers and audiences alike through storytelling, relevance, and craft. A two-time McKnight Artist Fellow, and recognized by *Musical America* for her "ability to use her talents to effect social change," Abbie studied composition at St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota, and the EAMA Nadia Boulanger Institute in Paris, France. She lives in Minnesota.

A Blessing of Cranes

MICHAEL DENNIS BROWNE

ABBIE BETINIS

Lyrics (m. 1–4): How do we love you _____ more than to

Lyrics (m. 5–8): shape you? _____ Turn-ing so firm-ly _____ in the shad-ows of

Lyrics (m. 9–12, S): fin-gers, of fin-gers. How do we love you more than to let you go?

Lyrics (m. 9–12, A): fin-gers. _____ How do we love you more than to let you go?

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* *Images represent the stages of folding a paper crane, so the singers can imagine the process as they sing the crane into existence (i.e. "m.7: fold D to B♭", etc).*
Choral pitches correspond to the origami pattern on p.19. The idea is to fold a metaphorical crane through singing. (To fold a crane physically, see p.21-22.)

15

S — Waves of earth's o - ceans, waves of our will - ing hands

A — Waves of earth's o - ceans, waves of our will - ing hands

warmly mf ... *cresc.*

23

S 1 — Creas - ing and fold - ing, creas - ing and fold - ing, un - fold - ing, fold - ing. Ah

S 2 — Creas - ing and fold - ing, creas - ing and fold - ing, un - fold - ing, fold - ing. How do we love you

A 1 — Creas - ing and fold - ing, creas - ing and fold - ing, un - fold - ing, fold - ing. Ah

A 2 — Creas - ing and fold - ing, creas - ing and fold - ing, un - fold - ing, un - fold - ing. Ah

27

S

...more than to shape, to shape you?

A

Ah ...to shape you?

poco rit.

31 *a tempo (slight rubato)*

mp *mf* *p*

35

S

Nev - er a thought of think - ing on - ly this weav - ing...

A

...on - ly this weav - ing...

p legato

p

mf *p*

S — Nev - er a thought of think-ing on-ly this weav-ing, weav-ing...

A — *Alto II only:* weav-ing, weav-ing... ...on-ly this weav-ing... ...on-ly this weav-ing, weav-ing...

mp

44

S 1 — Nev - er a thought of think-ing on - ly this weav - ing, weav - ing...

S 2 — *p* Nev - er a thought of think-ing on - ly this

A 1 — *p* Nev - er a thought of

A 2 — ...on - ly this weav - ing... ...on - ly this weav - ing, weav - ing...

mp

48

S 1: Nev-er a thought of think-ing on-ly this weav-ing, weav-ing...

S 2: *(4-pleat*)* weav-ing, think-ing on-ly this weav-ing, Nev-er a thought of think-ing on-ly this

A 1: think-ing on-ly this weav-ing, weav-ing, Nev-er a thought of

A 2: ...on-ly this weav-ing...

mp

52

S 1: Nev-er a thought of think-ing on-ly this

S 2: weav-ing, think-ing on-ly this weav-ing,

A 1: think-ing on-ly this weav-ing,

A 2: *mp* thou-(thou)-sands of wings, **div.** thou-(thou)-sands of wings, thou-(thou)-sands of wings,

* this is just a 4th part to the canon, "pleated" into S2

58

S: love you more than to let you go?

A: you... let you go?

A: love you more than to let you go?

Faster (♩ = ca. 132)

with quiet determination **p**

63

S 1: No trem-bling be-fore the task,

with quiet determination **p**

S 2: No trem-bling be-fore the task, *legato* **mp** sim-ply this

with quiet determination **p**

A 1: No trem-bling be-fore the task,

with quiet determination **p**

A 2: No trem-bling be-fore the task,

Faster (♩ = ca. 132)

p

77

S: *rallentando*
molto   *f*
ceiv - ing.

A: *molto*   *f*
ceiv - ing.

rallentando

83 **Tempo Primo** (♩ = 96)

S 1: *mf*
How do we love... How do we love you?

S 2: *mf*
How do we love you more, How do we love to make

A 1: *mf*
How do we love you more, How do we love you, How do we love to make

A 2: *mf*
How do we love you, love you more, we love you,

Tempo Primo (♩ = 96)

S 1 — Blos-soms that shim-mer, blos-soms that shim-mer and gath-er a-bout their branch-es,

S 2 — blos-soms that shim-mer, blos-soms that shim-mer and gath-er a-bout their... Ah...

A 1 — blos-soms that shim-mer, blos-soms that shim-mer and gath-er a-bout their... Ah...

A 2 — Blos-soms that shim-mer, blos-soms that shim-mer and gath-er a-bout their... Ah...

S 1 — Re - turn-ing to earth re - turn-ing, re -

S 2 — Re - turn-ing to earth re - turn - ing,

A 1 — Re - turn-ing to earth re - turn - ing,

A 2 — Ah... Turn-ing to earth re - turn - ing,

S 1

turn - ing _____ her peace,

S 2

turn - ing peace, her o - rig - i - nal bless - ing;

A 1

turn - ing peace, her o - rig - i - nal bless - ing;

A 2

turn - ing peace, her o - rig - i - nal bless - ing;

Tempo Primo (♩ = 96)

103

S

How do we love you more than to let you _____

A

How do we love you more than to let you... _____ let you

Tempo Primo (♩ = 96)

(rit) — — — — — — — — — — **Slower** (♩ = 76)

108

Small Group* *(or duet, or soloist)*

Deep - er than dream to say, e - ven than

S

go? ...let you go? [hum]‡...

A

go? [hum]‡...

111

Small Group* *(or duet, or soloist)*

sing - ing,_____ Re -

S

[hum]‡...

A

[hum]‡...

* If there are enough singers, try doubling this melody line softly in the humming chorus.

‡ Like a luscious, sustained, and ghostly string orchestra. Experiment with "nn" or "ng" -- or a very light "Vv" (sing 'Eh,' then rest top teeth on lower lip, without tension in the lips, and think more viola, less kazoo). Another option (if memorized): sing "eh" into your cupped hands, squeezing nose between both index fingers (this is also where we pinch the crane's beak).

115

Small Group* *(or duet, or soloist)*

leas - ing the wish - es we have, the ask - ing for heal - ing; _____ ask - ing for

S [hum]ᵻ...   S1 div. (opt'l)

[hum]ᵻ...

A [hum]ᵻ...

[hum]ᵻ...

warmly

119

a tempo (♩ = 76)

(2nd time: tutti echo, pp)

Small Group* *(or duet, or soloist)*

heal - ing; _____ ask - ing for heal - ing; _____

S *p* [hum]ᵻ... _____ ...we make

[hum]ᵻ...

S1
S2
A1

A *pp*

[hum]ᵻ...

thou - (thou) - sands of wings, Oo _____

[hum]ᵻ...

poco rit.   *a tempo* (♩ = 76)

p

pp

℗ed. _____

A Blessing of Cranes (Abbie Betinis)

Flying! ♩ = 76

128

S 1 — *mf* — wi[ng]s.... — *sim.* — wi[ng]s....

S 2 — *mf* — wi[ng]s.... Thou-sands of wi[ng]s.... Thou-sands of — *mf*

A 1 — *mp* — wings, — *mf* — thou-(thou)-sands of wings, thou-(thou)-sands of wings,

A 2 — *mf* — thou-(thou)-sands of wings, — *p* — repeat, ad lib (individual entrances)

Flying! ♩ = 76 — *mf*

132

S 1 — wi[ng]s... Thou-sands of wings we make, wi[ng]s....

S 2 — wi[ng]s.... Thou - sands of wi[ng]s.... — *mf* — Thou-sands of — *mf*

A 1 — *p* — thou-(thou)-sands of wings, — *mf* — repeat, ad lib (individual entrances)

A 2 — *mf* — *p* — repeat, ad lib (individual entrances)

136

S 1: wi[ng]s... Thou-sands of wings we make, wi[ng]s...

S 2: thou-(thou)-sands of wings, thou-(thou)-sands of wings, Thou-sands of wi[ng]s... Thou-sands of
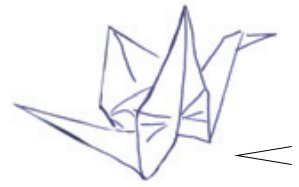
A 1: *mp* *mf* repeat, ad lib (individual entrances)

A 2: *mf* repeat, ad lib (individual entrances)

140

S: How do we ev - er love you more than to shape_____ you?

A: How do we ev - er love you more than to shape_____ you?

144

S — How do we love you more _____ than to let you go?

A — How do we love you more _____ than to let you go? _____

148   **Tempo Primo** (♩ = 96)

*mf warmly*   *mp*

152   *mp*

rit. — — —   *fading away*

rit.   *8va* — — —   *pp*

MAKE AN ORIGAMI PEACE CRANE
step-by-step folding instructions are on the following pages (or you can use the pictures in the score)

* use sharp scissors to cut out the square below as precisely as possible
* fold at a clean, flat surface
* to get nice, crisp folds, crease them with the edge of your thumbnail
* if it doesn't work the first time, don't worry (maybe you'll discover a new melody)
* **start with the music side down**
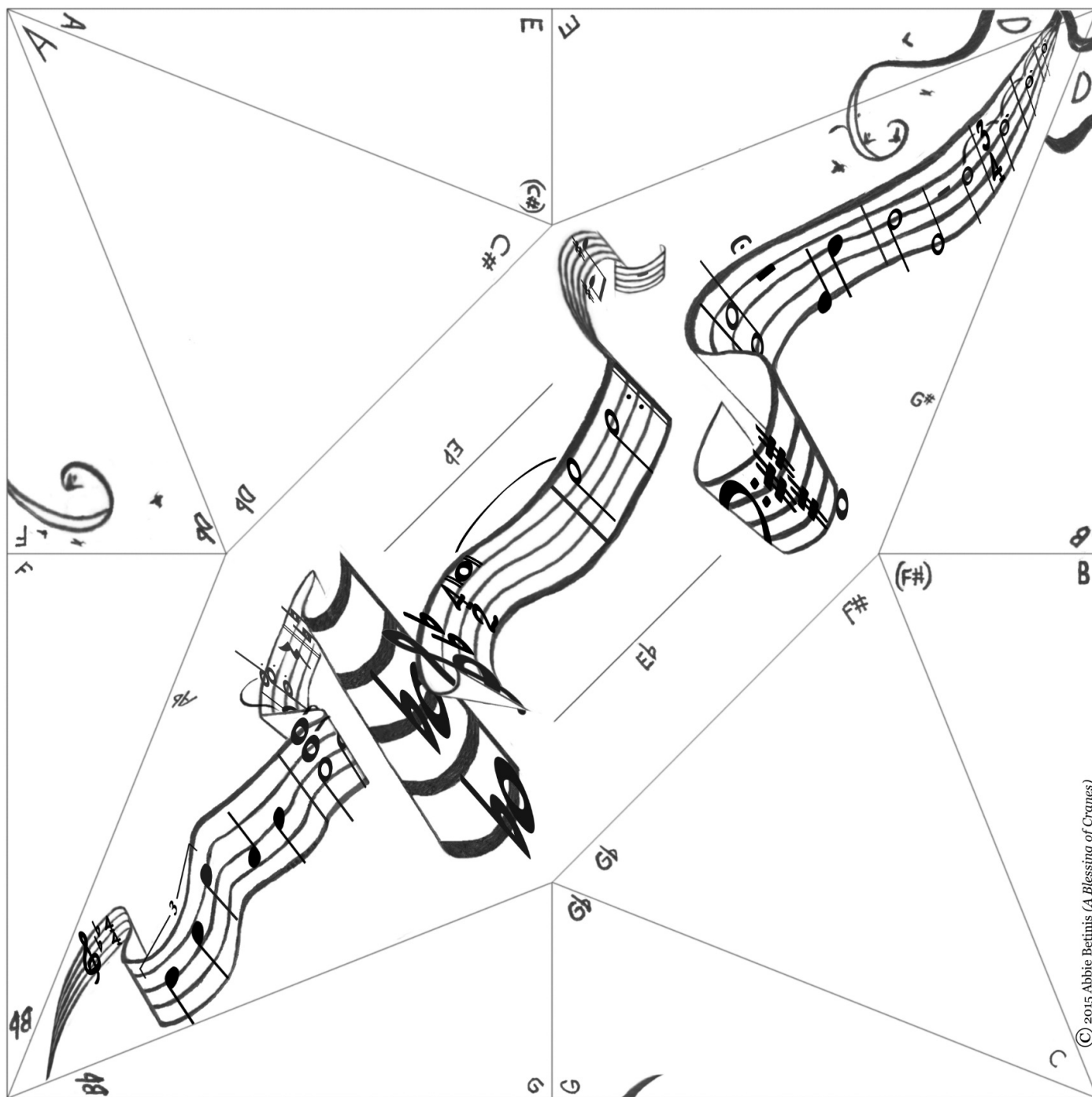
See more tips and ideas at www.abbiebetinis.com,
including a design with a blank staff, so you can write your own song on your origami crane.

MAKE AN ORIGAMI PEACE CRANE
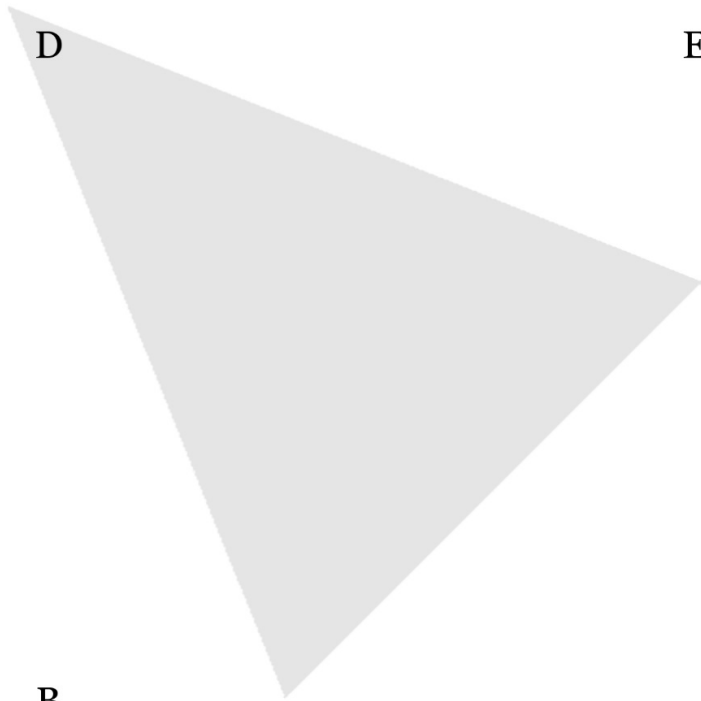"I will write peace on your wings, and you will fly all over the world." - *Sadako Sasaki*
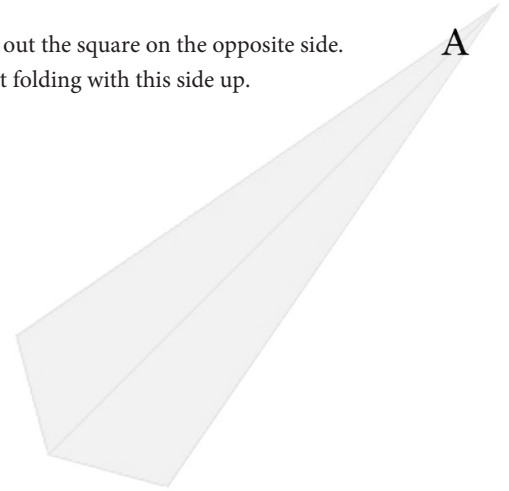
Opposite Side -- print this double-sided with the previous page
(...but don't worry if the printing doesn't match both up exactly. All the lines you need for folding are on the other side.)
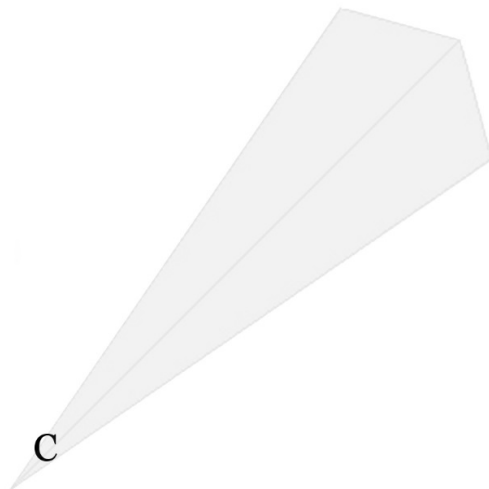
D

E

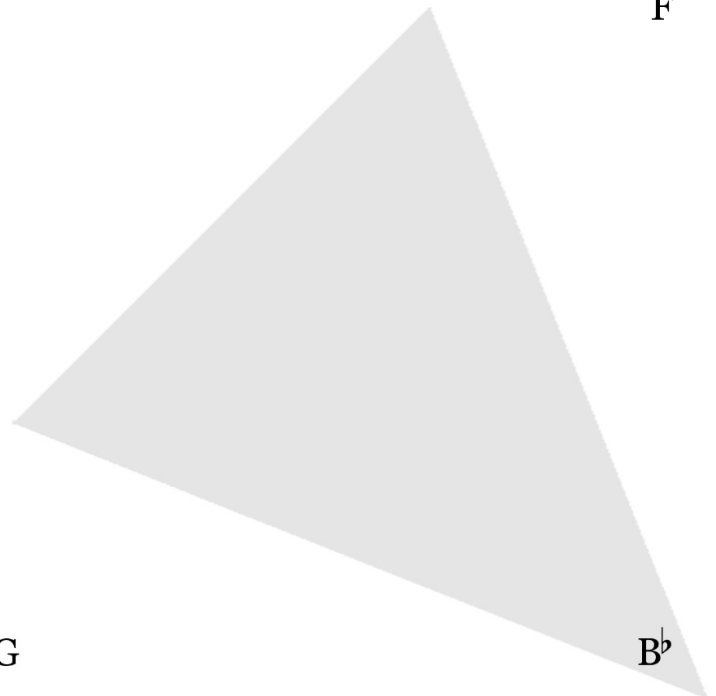1) Cut out the square on the opposite side.

2) Start folding with this side up.

A

B

F

C

G

B♭

Stanza 1 *("How do we love you"):* Preparing Your Square

m.2-3   Position the corners so they read (clockwise from top right):
A, B♭, C, D

m.4-5   The edges will be (counter-clockwise from top): E, B, G, F

m.7   Fold the D corner to the B♭ corner. Crease and unfold.
Fold D to B♭ again but around the back to reverse the fold. Unfold.

m.8   Fold the C corner to the A corner. Crease and unfold.
Fold C to A again but around the back to reverse the fold. Unfold.

m.11   Fold the C/B♭ edge to the D/A edge. Crease and unfold.

m.12   Fold the D/C edge to the A/B♭ edge. Crease and unfold.

Stanza 2 *("Waves of earth's oceans"):* Folding the Base

m.17   Your square is now "pre-creased" and will look a little wavy.

m.17-18   Bring all four corners A, B♭, C, D together, one at a time, and let
the old edges (E, F, G, B) pop out like flaps.

m.18-19   Turn the figure so the E and F flaps are on the left (G, B on right).

m.19   *(check to make sure those A, B♭, C, and D points are still touching!)*

m.21   Press down on the new square: E♭, G, B♭, F. *(E♭ is written as a note on the staff, and is the point farthest from you.)* This square has an open end facing you where A, B♭, C, D come together, and it should still have the E and F flaps on the left, and G and B on the right.

m.23   Flip the whole figure over (so D is now on top where B♭ had been).

m.23   Lift the E/D edge (the E flap), and fold it in to the D center line.

m. 24   Lift the B/D edge (the B flap), and fold it in to the center line too.

m.25   *(check that the points around the outside are now G, C/A, F)*

m.25-26   Flip the whole figure over (so G switches places with F).

m.26   Lift the F flap, and fold it in to the B♭/E♭ center line. *(D♭ appears)*

m.27   Lift the G flap, and fold it in to the B♭/E♭ center line. *(G♭ appears)*

m.27   You now have a kite-shape with a small triangle at the top (the E♭ triangle).   Fold that whole E♭ triangle down onto the bigger triangle of G♭, D♭, B♭. Firmly crease the new D♭-G♭ edge.

m.28-29   Lift the E♭ triangle back up and swing it over backward, down the other side. Press F and G so that the crease is firm.

m.29-30   Unfold all the recent folds to return to the square: E♭ G, B♭, F.
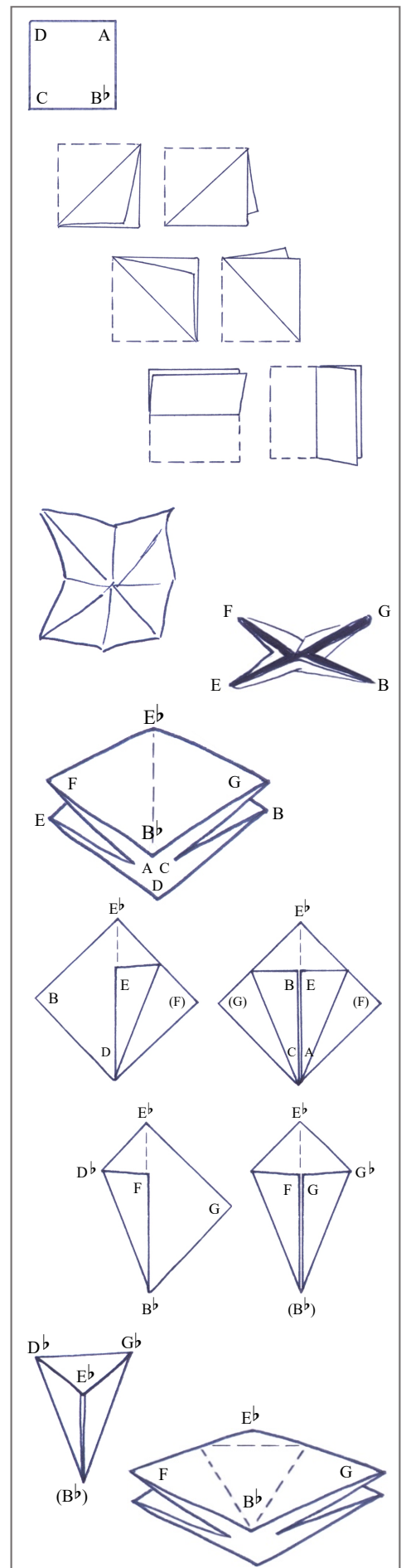
Stanza 3 (*"Never a thought"*): Creating the Wings

m.57	Carefully lift just the top layer of paper at the B♭ point (a bit like opening a crane's beak) up and over E♭. At the same time, coax F and G to come together at the center line, so the paper lies flat in a long diamond shape.
m.58	Press firmly on the F and G to reverse the crease between the D♭/G♭. (If this was a beak, it would 'hinge' at that crease.)
m.59	Flip figure over. *(reveals the melody you just sang there on the first wing, and if you peek behind the E♭ you'll find your next phrase too)*
m.59	Lift point D the same way, up and over E♭. Again, coax the E and B together, and then press them flat to reverse that F♯/C♯ 'hinge.'

Stanza 4 (*"No trembling"*): Creating the Body

m.64-66	Flip figure over (so B♭ is on top). Separate the D♭ edge from the flap below, and fold D♭ edge in to meet the F/B♭ center line. *(A♭ appears)*
m.67	Fold the G♭ flap in to meet the G/B♭ center line. *(G♯ appears)*
m.67-68	Flip figure over (so D is on top), and fold the F♯ flap in to meet the B/D center line. *(G♯ re-appears)*
m.69	Fold the C♯ flap in to meet the E/D center line.
m.71-74	Separate the outer edge of that C♯ flap from the flap below, and turn that C♯ flap to the left, like turning the page of a book. (This is called a book fold.) Squish it against the G♯ and F♯. *(reveals E♭, with A at the bottom)*
m.75-78	Flip figure over and repeat the book fold: Lift the G♭ flap (careful to take only the G♭) and 'turn the page' to the left, squishing the A♭ and D♭. *(reveals E♭, with C at the bottom)*
m.85	Lift the C from the bottom, all the way up to join the B♭ and D points at the top. Crease it at the printed line below E♭.
m.88	Flip figure over and repeat: Lift the A all the way up to join the B♭, D, and C points at the top. Crease it at the printed line below E♭.

Stanza 5 (*"Blossoms that shimmer"*): The Sitting Crane

m.94-96	Next is another book fold: Find the B♭/D♭ flap, and 'turn the page' to the left (toward E♭/A). Press to flatten A. *(You will see B♭, G♭, D♭, A♭.)*
m.99-100	Flip figure over and repeat: Find top-layer of the D flap (D, F♯, G♯) and 'turn the page' again (toward E♭/C). *(You now see D C♯ F♯G♯.)*
m.105-107	Flip figure over. Of the four points at the top, find the A (left) and gently pull it out and down to the level of the A♭ to form crane's tail.
m.107	Pinch the D♭ and C♯ together at the bottom to crease the new fold.
m.106-107	Gently pull the C point out to the right, and lower it to about the same level (also the level of the G♯ on other side) to make the crane's neck.
m.108	Pinch the G♭ and F♯ together to crease the new fold.
m.107-109	To make the head of the crane, bend the tip of C down, and gently pinch the crane's beak to reverse the fold.

Stanza 6 (*"Deeper than dream"*): The Flying Crane

m.140-141	Facing your crane, carefully separate B♭ from D to open its wings, then carefully pull its head and tail – very gently – to expand the body. *(reveals the final phrase of the song)*

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