

What do you think I fought for at Omaha Beach?

For SATB choir
7 min

Melissa Dunphy

What do you think I fought for at Omaha Beach? was the winner of the inaugural Simon Carrington Chamber Singers Composition Competition and was premiered by the group, conducted by Simon Carrington, in Kansas City, MO, and Lawrence, KS, on May 29, 2010.

Melissa Dunphy (b. 1980) has composed in a wide range of styles and mediums, particularly in the realm of theatre. Her nationally acclaimed large-scale choral work *The Gonzales Cantata* (www.gonzalescantata.com) premiered at the 2009 Philadelphia Fringe Festival, enjoyed a sold-out run in 2011 at the American Opera Theater, and has received rave press and reviews from *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic*, *Harper's Magazine*, and MSNBC's Rachel Maddow (“the coolest thing you will ever see on this show”). Melissa has received awards and honors from the National Opera Association, National Association of Teachers of Singing, ASCAP/Lotte Lehmann Foundation, the Simon Carrington Chamber Singers, Network for New Music, and the National Association of Composers, among others. Melissa was awarded an Associate Diploma in viola performance from the Australian Music Examinations Board at age 16. She has a Bachelor of Music (summa cum laude, Pi Kappa Lambda) from West Chester University, and she is currently undertaking doctoral studies in composition at the University of Pennsylvania on a Benjamin Franklin Fellowship. Her instructors have included Robert Maggio, Larry Nelson, Van Stiefel, Jim Primosch, Anna Weesner, and Jay Reise.

Good morning, committee. My name is Phillip Spooner and I live at 5 Graham Street in Biddeford. I am 86 years old and a lifetime Republican and an active VFW chaplain ... I was born on a potato farm north of Caribou and Perham, where I was raised to believe that all men are created equal and I've never forgotten that.

I served in the U.S. Army, 1942-1945 ... I worked with every outfit over there, including Patton's Third Army. I saw action in all five major battles in Europe ... I was in the liberation of Paris.

(I have seen much, so much blood and guts, so much suffering, much sadness, much sacrifice.)

I am here today because of a conversation I had last June when I was voting. A woman ... asked me, "Do you believe in equality for gay and lesbian people?" I was pretty surprised to be asked a question like that. It made no sense to me. Finally I asked her, "What do you think I fought for at Omaha Beach?"

For freedom and equality. These are the values that make America a great nation, one worth dying for.

My wife and I did not raise four sons with the idea that our gay son would be left out. We raised them all to be hard-working, proud, and loyal Americans and they all did good.

-- Public testimony given before the Maine Senate by Phillip Spooner in a hearing to discuss the Marriage Equality Bill on April 22, 2009. Nearly 4,000 people attended the hearing, with marriage equality supporters out-numbering the opposition 4 to 1.

On November 2, 2009, Maine voters repealed the bill that allowed same-sex couples the right to marry.

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For SATB Chorus
Text taken from testimony before Maine State Congress
by Philip Spooner

Melissa Dunphy

Adagio ♩=60

Soprano *p*
Good morn-ing, com-mit-tee _____ Good

Alto *p*
My name is Phil-lip Spoon-er, and I live at 5 Gra-ham Street in Bid-de-ford.

Tenor *p*
My name is Phil-lip Spoon-er, and I live at 5 Gra-ham Street in Bid-de-ford.

Bass *p*
Good



5
S. *3*
morn - ing com-mit tee _____ I am eight-y - six years

A. _____ I am eight-y - six years old. My name is Phil-lip

T. _____ I am eight-y - six years old _____ and a life -

B. *3*
morn - ing com-mit-tee _____ I am a life time Re-pub-li-can

S. old and an act-ive V - F-dou-ble-U Chap lain.

A. Spoon- er, and I live at 5 Gra-ham Street in

T. time Re-pub-li- can, and an act-ive V - F-dou-ble-U Chap lain.

B. I am a life - time Re - pub - li - can, and I live at 5 Gra-ham Street.

S. *mf* **A** I was born on a po-ta - to farm, where I was

A. Bid-de-ford. *mf* I was born on a po-ta - to farm, where I was

T. north of Car-i - bou and Per-ham

B. north of Car-i - bou and Per-ham

S. raised to be-lieve that all men are cre-at-ed e - qual,

A. raised to be-lieve that all men are cre-at-ed e - qual, all

T. where I was raised to be-lieve that all men are cre-at-ed e -

B. where I was raised to be-lieve that all men are cre-at-ed e - qual, all

4 20

S. *ff* all men are cre - at - ed e - qual, e - qual, *mp* e - qual.

A. *ff* men are cre - at - ed e - qual, e - qual, *mp* e - qual.

T. *ff* qual, are cre - at - ed e - qual, e - qual, *mp* e - qual.

B. *ff* men are cre - at - ed e - qual, e - qual, *mp* e - qual.

24 **B** *Piu Mosso* ♩=70

S. and I've nev - er, I've ne - ver for - got - ten that.

A. *p* and I've nev - er, I've ne - ver for - got - ten that. *mf jauntily* I served in the

T. *p* and I've nev - er. *mf jauntily* I served in the U. S. Ar - my,

B. *p* and I've nev - er. *mf jauntily* I served in the U. S. Ar - my,

28 *pp sotto voce* or 2 solo voices

S. I have seen

A. U. S. Ar - my. I worked with e - v'ry out - fit o - ver there, I

T. Nine - teen for - ty two to nine - teen for - ty - five I served in the U. S. Ar - my,

B. Nine - teen for - ty two to nine - teen for - ty - five I served in the U. S.

31

S.1
much, so much blood and

S.2
much, so much blood and

A.
worked with e - v'ry out-fit o - ver there, in - clu-ding Pat - ton's Third Ar-my, Pat - ton's Third

T.
I saw act-ion in all five ma-jor bat-tles in Eu rope I served in the U. S.

B.
Ar - my, I saw act-ion in all five ma-jor bat-tles in Eu rope I



34

S.1
guts, so much suf - fer - ing, suf-fer-ing, much sad - ness,

S.2
guts, so much suf-fer - ing, suf-fer-ing, much sad - ness,

A.
Ar-my. I was in the li - ber-a - tion of Pa - ris, of Pa - ris,

T.
Ar - my, I served in the U. S. Ar-my, I worked with e - v'ry out - fit o - ver there. —

B.
served in the U. S. Ar - my, Nine-teen for-ty two to nine-teen for-ty- five. —

p tutti

mf

f

6

38

molto rit. C *Tempo I*

S.1
much sac- ri- fice, I have seen much, _____ much.

S.2
much sac- ri- fice, I have seen much. _____ I am here, _____

A1.
Pa- ris. _____ I am here, _____ I am here, _____

A2.
Pa- ris. _____ I am here, _____ I am here, _____

T.

B.

46

Piu Mosso ♩=70

S.1
_____ I am here to - day be-cause of a con-ver-

S.2
_____ I am here to - day be-cause of a con-ver-

A1.
_____ I am here be-cause of a con-ver -sa-tion, be-

A2.
_____ I am here be-cause of a con-ver -sa-tion, be-

T.
_____ I am here, _____ I am here. _____ be-cause of a con-ver -sa-tion, be-

B.
_____ I am here _____ be-cause of a con-ver -sa-tion, be-

51 *mf* 7

S. sa - tion, be-cause of a con-ver - sa-tion I had last June when I was vot-ing. A wo - man asked me:

A. cause_ of a con-ver - sa-tion I had last June when I was vot-ing. A wo - man asked me:

T. cause_ of a con-ver - sa-tion I had last June. A wo - man asked me:

B. cause_ of a con-ver - sa-tion I had last June. A wo - man asked me:

D

solo a piacere

56 *f*

S. Do you be - lieve_____ in e - qual - it - y for gay and les - bi - an peo - ple?

E

f tutti

59

S. I was pret - ty sur - prised to be asked a ques - tion like that. It made no

A. I was pret - ty sur - prised to be asked a ques - tion like that. It

T. I was pret - ty sur - prised_____ to be asked a ques - tion like that.

B. I was pret - ty sur - prised, pret - ty sur - prised.

rit. Tempo I

62

S.1 sense to me. It made no sense to me, no sense___ to me.

S.2 sense to me. It made no sense to me, no sense___ to me.

A. made no sense to me. It made no sense to me. It made no sense to me,

T. It made no sense to me. It made no sense to me. It made no sense to me.

B. It made no sense, it made no sense to me.



F

66

S.1 What do you think I

S.2 *semplice p* What___ do you think I fought for at O - ma-ha Beach?___

A. *pp* I asked her,___

T.

B. *mf* Fin-al-ly I asked her,___ *pp* I asked her,___ I

73

S.1 *mp* 3
fought for at O - ma-ha Beach? What do you think I fought for at

S.2 *mp*
O - ma-ha Beach? O - ma - ha,

A. *mp* 3
I asked her. What do you think I fought for? I asked her:—

T. *pp* 3 3 *mp*
I asked her what do you think I fought for at O - ma-ha

B. *mp* 3
asked her, What do you think I fought for at



78

G

S.1 *mf* 3
O - ma-ha Beach? I asked her: What do you think I fought for at

S.2 *mf* 3
O - ma - ha Beach? What do you think I fought for, what do you think I fought for at

A. *p* 3 *mf* 3
What do you think I fought for at O-ma-ha Beach, for at O - ma - ha

T. *p* 3 *mf* 3
Beach? What do you think I fought, I fought for at O - ma - ha

B. 3
O - ma ha, what do you think I fought

82

S.1 O - ma - ha Beach? What do you think I fought for at

S.2 O - ma - ha Beach? What do you think I fought for at

A. Beach? What do you think I fought for at

T. Beach? What do you think I fought for at

B. for? What do you think I fought for at

H

85

S.1 O - ma-ha Beach? For free - dom, free - dom, free - dom,

S.2 O - ma-ha Beach? For free - dom, free - dom, free - dom,

A. O - ma-ha Beach? For free - dom, free - dom, free - dom, free -

T. O - ma-ha Beach? For free - dom, free - dom, free - dom, for

B. O - ma-ha Beach? For free - dom, for free - dom, free - dom,

90

S. free - dom and e - qual - it - y. These are the va-lues that make A - mer - i - ca

A. dom and e - qual - it - y. These are the va-lues that make A - mer - i - ca A -

T. free - dom and e - qual - i - ty. These are the va-lues that make A - mer - i - ca

B. free - dom and e - qual - i - ty. These are the va-lues that make A - mer - i - ca

94

S.1. A - mer - i - ca a great na-tion, a great na-tion. My

S.2. A - mer - i - ca a great na-tion, a great na-tion. My

A. mer - i - ca a great na-tion, a great na-tion. My

T. A - mer - i - ca a great na-tion, a great na-tion, one worth dy - ing for.

B. A - mer - i - ca a great na-tion, a great na-tion, one worth dy - ing for.

I

12 98

S. wife and I did not raise four sons with the i - dea that our gay son would be left

A. wife and I did not raise four sons with the i - dea that our gay son would be left

T. *p* Raise four sons that our gay son,

B. *p* Raise four sons that our gay son,

103

S. out. all to be hard - work - ing, proud and loy - al A - mer - i - cans. They

A. out. all to be hard - work - ing and loy - al A - mer - i - cans, A - mer - i - cans. They

T. *p* We raised them all to be hard - work - ing, proud and loy - al A - mer - i - cans, and they all

B. *p* all to be proud and loy - al A - mer - i - cans. They

rit.

108

S. all did good. They all did good.

A. all, they all did good. They all did good.

T. did good. They all did good.

B. all did good. They all did good.



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