

Commissioned by the Flower Mound High School Jaguar Chorale  
Dr. Mark Rohwer, Conductor

# when god decided to invent

For Keith Koehlmoos and Dagan Hanson

E.E. Cummings

Joshua Shank

With rubato ♩ = c. 60

Soprano Saxophone (concert pitch)

Finger Cymbals

9

when god de-cid-ed to in-vent \_\_\_\_\_ ev - 'ry - thing he took one \_\_\_\_\_

when god de-cid-ed to in-vent \_\_\_\_\_ ev - 'ry - thing he took one

when god \_\_\_\_\_ ev - 'ry - thing one

when god \_\_\_\_\_ ev - 'ry - thing one

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Printed in the U.S.A.

breath big-ger than a cir - cus - tent and ev - 'ry - thing be - gan

breath big-ger than a cir - cus - tent and ev - 'ry - thing be - gan

breath and ev - 'ry - thing be -

breath and ev - 'ry - thing be -

15 Undulating (same tempo)

*mf*

**For Perusal Only**

*mf*

gan one breath, one breath, one

gan one breath, one breath, one

*mf* one

*one*

*simile*

breath, one breath, one breath, one

*simile*

breath, one breath, one breath, one

20

breath, one breath, one breath, one

*simile*

breath, one breath, one breath, one

breath, one breath, one breath, one

breath, one breath, one breath, one

For Perusal Only

21

*mf placidly*

one breath, one breath, one breath, one

breath, one breath, one breath, one

breath, one breath, one breath, one

breath, one breath, one breath, one

breath, one breath, one breath, one

28

breath, one breath, one *f*

breath, one breath, one *f*

breath, one breath, one *f*

breath, one breath, one *f*

breath, one breath, one *f*

# For Perusal Only

breath, one breath, one breath, hawh, *ff*

breath, one breath, one breath, hawh, *ff*

breath, one breath, one breath, hawh, *ff*

breath, one breath, one breath, hawh, *ff*

breath, one breath, hawh, *ff*

32

ff

hawh,

ff

hawh,

hawh,

hawh,

hawh,

For Perusal Only

30

stringendo

rit.

oh,

stringendo

rit.

oh,

stringendo

rit.

oh,

stringendo

rit.

oh,

40 In 2  $\text{♩} = c. 60$  43

when man, \_\_\_\_\_

when man, \_\_\_\_\_ when

when man, \_\_\_\_\_ when man, \_\_\_\_\_

49

*mp* when man \_\_\_\_\_ de - ter - mined to de -

*mp* when man \_\_\_\_\_ de - ter - mined to de -

man, \_\_\_\_\_ when man \_\_\_\_\_ de - ter - mined to de -

\_\_\_\_\_ when man \_\_\_\_\_ de - ter - mined to \_\_\_\_\_

**For Perusal Only**

53

*mf*

stroy him - self he picked the was of shall

stroy him - self he picked the was of shall

stroy, de - stroy, de - stroy, de -

de - stroy, de - stroy, de - stroy,

For Perusal Only

57

and find - ing on - ly why smashed it in - to be -

and find - ing on - ly why smashed it in - to be -

stroy, de - stroy, de - stroy,

de - stroy, de - stroy, de - stroy,

cause sh

cause sh

*mf* la

*mf* la

For Perusal Only

*ff*

*f sempre* sha la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

*f sempre* sha la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

*f sempre* la

*f sempre* la



First system of music. It consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line and lyrics 'la la'. The second staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and lyrics 'la la'. The third staff is another piano accompaniment with chords and lyrics 'la la'. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment with a melodic line and lyrics 'la la'. The fifth staff is a piano accompaniment with a melodic line and lyrics 'la la'. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#).

For Perusal Only

Second system of music. It consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line and lyrics 'la la'. The second staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and lyrics 'la la'. The third staff is another piano accompaniment with chords and lyrics 'la la'. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment with a melodic line and lyrics 'la la'. The fifth staff is a piano accompaniment with a melodic line and lyrics 'la la'. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#).



la  
la

la la la la la la  
la la la la la la

la la la la la la  
la la la la la la

la

For Perusal Only

la la la la la la  
la la la la la la

la la la la la la  
la la la la la la

la la la la la la  
la la la la la la

la la la la la la  
la la la la la la

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86

la la la la la la la la

la la la la la la la

la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

Musical score for the first system. It consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line. The second and third staves are vocal lines with long, sustained notes labeled "la". The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment consisting of a series of chords, with the word "la" written below each chord. The fifth staff is a piano accompaniment consisting of a series of chords, with the word "la" written below each chord.

For Perusal Only

Musical score for the second system. It consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line. The second and third staves are vocal lines with long, sustained notes labeled "la". The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment consisting of a series of chords, with the word "la" written below each chord. The fifth staff is a piano accompaniment consisting of a series of chords, with the word "la" written below each chord.

This system contains five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line of eighth notes. The second and third staves are vocal lines with long, sustained notes, each labeled with the syllable "la". The fourth staff is a vocal line with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, labeled with "la" syllables. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment line with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, also labeled with "la" syllables.

For Perusal Only

This system contains five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line, including a triplet of eighth notes marked with a circled "98". The second, third, and fourth staves are vocal lines with long, sustained notes, each labeled with the syllable "hawh,". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment line with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, labeled with "la" syllables.

la la la la la la la la la

Burnsville, December 2005

**About the composer**

Born in 1980, Joshua Shank is quickly becoming recognized as a talented and innovative young composer whose music has been widely performed by high school and professional ensembles alike. He received his undergraduate degree in Vocal Music Education from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

In 2002, Joshua became the youngest composer ever awarded the Raymond W. Brock Student Composition Award by the American Choral Directors Association. The winning piece, *Musica animam tangens* (written at the age of 20), was premiered at the 2003 ACDA National Convention.

Visit [www.sbmp.com](http://www.sbmp.com) to listen to a recording of this piece and to see and hear additional titles by Joshua Shank.

**The Text**

By E.E. Cummings (1894-1962)  
From *1 x 1 [One Times One]*

when god decided to invent  
everything he took one  
breath bigger than a circustent  
and everything began

when man determined to destroy  
himself he picked the was  
of shall and finding only why  
smashed it into because

**Note from the composer**

I thought a lot about what the creation of the world would actually be like. Would it be something so vast and epic that it might be perceived with some degree of violence? Or would it be meticulously planned and lovingly, playfully executed? I chose the latter and, because of that, my "creation" music is more intimate than larger-than-life. The last chord (and what comes after it) is meant to sound "transformative." For some reason, the ending is always the last thing I write and by the time I got there the arc of the piece was "creation/destruction/re-creation." This final chord is the creator taking control of the creation again.

**Performance notes**

The closer the harmonies, the less vibrato should be used. Staggered breathing should be employed throughout with no apparent break in the musical line unless specified.

**Range**

S1 S2 A1 A2 T1 T2 B1 B2

Soprano saxophone part: SBMP 693.1