

ONCE ON A MOUNTAIN by Stephen Leek is in seven distinct, untitled sections. The wonderfully illuminating texts of Douglas Stewart were chosen to examine the natural riches and beauties of our continent, Australia: riches which have existed long before the arrival of any peoples, white or dark; riches which still exist for all to admire. Australia's heritage, Australia's tradition, indeed Australia's national treasures lie in the mountains, the forests, the native flora and fauna and in the vast expanses of water within and surrounding it. Man is such a recent arrival to this country: should we not all be humbled by the tradition and beauty in which we live?

ONCE ON A MOUNTAIN

(Text compiled from works of Douglas Stewart and Stephen Leek)

1. *Once on a mountain, I stood alone
In miles of moonlight, and great grey
Megolithic outcrops of granite.
I see this old land has bones under its grass.*

Once on a mountain I was alone.

2. *Look! There are dark hands in the black rock.
Man's hands, woman's hands, a child's hand
Hiding in a rock cave.*

*Shadows, they seem to wave
In a language of gesture beckon*

*Shadows, they seem to wave
Up from the green water we struggled here,
Here we camped and here we shall be remembered*

*Look! There are dark hands in the black rock
Man's hands, woman's hands, a child's hand
Hiding in a hidden grave.*

Once on a mountain

3. *Then he broke through the wall like grass,
A hundred waratahs, watched them trespass.
It was no place to come to at will.
The wild bush lived there
Private and still.*

*And the tall slim waratahs
So many and so many
Glimmered
Proud.*

*It was no place to come at will
The wild bush lived
Private and still.
But they were so still and tall
They looked just like people.*

4. *And straight away
Like a bellbird
Came the low
Clear, sad
Murmur of distant
Water.*

ONCE ON A MOUNTAIN







by Stephen Leek

Once on a Mountain for S.A.T.B Choir by Stephen Leek is dedicated to the singers in the St Peters Chorale and to their Director, Graeme Morton. The Chorale consists of up to eighty singers between the ages of fourteen and seventeen and the work is subsequently written with this in mind, making it transferrable to other ensembles of similar skill. It is not absolutely necessary that there be as many singers but at times in 'Once on a Mountain' a big, solid sound is called for. There are also two virtuoso soprano solo lines which also must be considered.

The work is in seven sections and it is desirable that the seven be performed continuously as a set, however, if this is not possible I would be happy for them to be sung in isolation; acknowledgment must therefore be given as extract from 'Once on a Mountain' nos

The work's duration is unknown as each and every performance should and will be quite different. Many of the tempos and durations are left to the discretion of the conductor during performance.

INSTRUCTIONS

- . The choir must always stand to perform and rehearse this work.
- . When not indicated durations and tempos are left to the discretion of the conductor and/or soloists.
- . Most of the articulation in this work is over emphasised to add a very percussive quality to the performance.
- . Clusters   should be approached through simple workshop exercises in order that a good spread is achieved and it is controllable.
- . Where a dim or cresc starts/finishes with a circle   the sound should come from, go to nothing.
- .  indicates a simple cue from the conductor; here he would cue with three fingers indicating it is cue number 3; similarly  just indicates a cue from the conductor.
- . Where choices are left to the discretion of the performers, a suitable way to get the desired sound quality is through workshopping several different ways.