

MOJAVE CROSS, DESERT VOICES

SATB, Auxiliary Percussion, Timpani, Piano

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Background

The Mojave Memorial Cross was erected in 1934 to honor the veteran soldiers of World War I, and its history is quite convoluted. Embroiled in several court dramas at the state and federal levels, the memorial had been ruled a violation of the separation of church and state, then subsequently overturned when the United States Congress transferred the land surrounding the cross to a veteran's group. On May 10, 2010, this cross was stolen.

Obviously the emotions which represent this landmark are profound and run very deep. To my knowledge, there are no known choral pieces that represent this landmark, nor the lands that surround it. The goal of *Mojave Cross, Desert Voices* is not only to pay homage to these soldiers ("the ghosts of World War I"), but to capture with a choral voice the feel and sounds of the desert land. The monument itself is in a very inhospitable part of the Mojave Desert, near a ghost town called Cima. Other desert locations are cited, such as Zzyzx, Kelso, and Soda Springs, all part of a theatrical and sonic mélange to create a choral picture of the California desert environment. The main musical effect I wish to achieve in this piece is a kind of rugged, yet distant and ethereal, sheen. The proportional section in the middle should be approached more like actors than singers and can be interpreted in a very free fashion.

♩ = 130 **Robust**

The musical score is arranged in a grand staff format with the following parts from top to bottom:

- Soprano:** Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. The staff contains rests for the first three measures.
- Alto:** Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. The staff contains rests for the first three measures.
- Tenor:** Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. The staff contains rests for the first three measures.
- Bass:** Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The staff contains rests for the first three measures.
- Aux. Perc.:** Percussion clef, 4/4 time signature. The first measure features a flexatone with the instruction "flexatone: indefinite pitches" and a dynamic marking of *f*. The second and third measures contain rests.
- Timpani:** Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The first measure features a dynamic marking of *f*. The notes are F, Ab, C, and Ab.
- Piano:** Grand staff (treble and bass clefs), 4/4 time signature. The first measure features a dynamic marking of *f*. The piano part includes complex chords and melodic lines in both hands.

MOJAVE CROSS, DESERT VOICES

4

S

A

Aux. Perc.

Timpani

Piano

leggiro, con moto
mf

Mo-ja - veCross is

Mo-ja - veCross is



8

go - ing down un - der ground Mo-ja - ve cross is go - ing down not found sto - len in the month of May

go - ing down un - der ground Mo-ja - ve cross is go - ing down not found sto - len in the month of May

MOJAVE CROSS, DESERT VOICES

3

12

S — two thou - sand ten a sym - bol, se - par - a - tion *mp*

A — two thou - sand ten a sym - bol, se - par - a - tion *mp*

T

B

Aux. Perc. *f*

Timpani *f*

Piano *f* *mp*

MOJAVE CROSS, DESERT VOICES

16

mf

placed on sun-rise rock _____ six miles north of

mf

placed on sun-rise rock _____ six miles north of

mf

Ped.

MOJAVE CROSS, DESERT VOICES

5

* Pronounce as "see-ma"

20 div. *ma*

Ci - - - *ma*

div. *ma*

Ci - - - *ma*

mp in nine - teen - thir - ty four

mp in nine - teen - thir - ty four

Red.

MOJAVE CROSS, DESERT VOICES

23

unis.

the ghosts of World War one fowl the de - sert

unis.

the ghosts of World War one fowl the de - sert

Ped. Ped. Ped.