

Before a Common Soil

For mixed chorus, brass sextet and timpani

Composed for the 45th anniversary gala for Revels, held in Boston MA, April 30, 2016

Ifeanyi Menkiti writes that this poem “aims to project an African expression evocative of the roots of our common world -- i.e., the idea found in the Ibo-African expression *ani malu* (“let the earth bear witness”). The notion invoked is of the power of the earth to bind not just biological life, but also the social ceremonies which speech has made possible, which song celebrates, and which ritual re-enacts year in and year out.”

Music: George Emlen
Poetry: Ifeanyi Menkiti

Moderato ♩ = 92

ff

S
A
T
B

Let this then be your un-der - stan - ding, you

Let this then be your un-der - stan - ding, you

Let this then be your un-der - stan - ding, you

Let this then be your un-der - stan - ding, you