

PREVIEW

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TTBB

Casey at the Bat

\$2.50

Christopher Alexander

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TTBB, a cappella

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cantareworks

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

About the Work

Reminiscent of the treasured Robert Shaw sea chanty and glee club arrangements, this jovial work will bring joy and brotherhood to your men's choir rehearsals and performances. In 6/8 meter and an accessible melodic range, the work evolves into a new texture with each new stanza of the famous Ernest Lawrence Thayer poem. There are opportunities for solos and a small ensemble for singers to be in the spotlight. Take a swing with your men's choir, and your audience will enjoy this work like it's a night out at the ballpark!

This composition is the Second Prize winner (Tenor/Bass Choir) in the 2023 ACDA Composition Focus Prize.

More background information and full text of the poem on next page.

About the Composer



Mr. Christopher Alexander is an award-winning composer and arranger from St. Joseph, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Science in Vocal Music Education degree from Missouri Western State University in 2009. A self-taught pianist, his compositions and arrangements ranging from instrumental works to vocal solo and choral literature. Mr. Alexander has been commissioned numerous times by singing groups and church choirs within the northwest Missouri and northeast Kansas regions. He is also active in musical theatre productions as a music director and pianist. His works have been published with GIA Music Publications and Hal Leonard.

In 2016, he was awarded the St. Joseph Allied Arts Council Mayor's Award for Artist of the Year. In 2022, he was inducted into the New Generation Singers Hall of Fame.

Mr. Alexander currently serves as the pianist and primary arranger for The New Generation Singers, a Christian singing youth group based in St. Joseph, Missouri. He is a member of NAFME, ACDA, MCDA, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity.

He is available for commissions and conducting events on request.

Thayer's poem was first published in the Daily Examiner (now known as the San Francisco Examiner) on June 3, 1888. Its text includes many baseball references and jargon of its time. The narrative of the fictionalized baseball game became adapted and popularized through various entertainment performances such as vaudeville with DeWolf Hopper, a cartoon version by Walt Disney in the film *Make Mine Music*, and even with magicians Penn & Teller among many others. Many consider Thayer's poem to be among the greatest poems in American literature.

Casey at the Bat

A Ballad of the Republic, Sung in the Year 1888

*The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day:
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play,
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A pall-like silence fell upon the patrons of the game.*

*A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast,
They murmured, "If only Casey could but get a whack at that—
We'd put up even money now, with Casey at the bat!"*

*But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a hoodoo, while the latter was a cake;
So upon that stricken multitude a melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey getting to the bat.*

*But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and men saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-bugging third.*

*Then from five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
It pounded on the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.*

**There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile lit Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.*

**Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded
when he wiped them on his shirt;
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance flashed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.*

*And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
"What ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one!" the umpire said.*

*From the benches, black with people,
there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm waves on a stern and distant shore;
"Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand;
And it's likely they'd have killed him
had not Casey raised his hand.*

*With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the dun sphere flew;
But Casey still ignored it and the umpire said, "Strike two!"*

**"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands,
and echo answered "Fraud!"
But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.*

*The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate,
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate;
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.*

*Oh, somewhere in this favoured land the sun is shining bright,
The hand is playing somewhere, and somewhere feet are light;
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out.*

— Ernest Lawrence Thayer (1863-1940)

— stanza omitted in composition

Second Prize winner (Tenor/Bass Choir) of the 2023 ACDA Composition Focus Prize

Casey At the Bat

for TTBB, a cappella

Words by
ERNEST LAWRENCE THAYER
(1863-1940)

Music by
CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

Jovial! (♩ = c. 116-120)

mf unis.

TENOR 1
TENOR 2

BARITONE
BASS

PIANO
(for rehearsal
only)

The out - look was - n't bril - liant for the Mud - ville nine that day: The

TEN. 1
TEN. 2

BAR.
BASS

score stood four to two, with but one inn - ing more to play, And

TEN. 1
TEN. 2

BAR.
BASS

then when Coo - ney died at first, and Bar - rows did the same, A

Casey At the Bat

TEN. 1
TEN. 2

8

13

BAR. BASS

8

13

pall - like si - lence fell u - pon the pa - trons of the game. A

pall - like si - lence fell u - pon the pa - trons of the game.

TEN. 1
TEN. 2

8

17

BAR. BASS

8

17

strag - gling few got up to go in deep des - pair. The rest clung

TEN. 1
TEN. 2

8

21

BAR. BASS

8

21

to the hope which springs e - ter - nal in the hu - man breast;

They

