

JUDITH
SHATIN

La Frontera

Chorus and Piano



Program Notes: *La Frontera*

La Frontera (The Border) is a poem by an undocumented immigrant youth imprisoned in an American maximum security detention center. Sadly, we cannot know the identity of the author due to government restrictions. But the words cry out to be heard and immortalized in music, scored here for chorus and piano. Versions are also available for soprano/piano and tenor/piano. I was drawn to set this poem because it captures the dark realities of the immigration process as well as the powerful desire to immigrate to America.

As the granddaughter and wife of immigrants, indeed as a citizen of the United States, I am deeply aware of both the astonishing and ongoing contributions of immigrants as well as the despicable treatment so many experience. Why do we forget our own status as immigrants or descendants of immigrants, and then deny the status of those who descend from indigenous peoples?

This poem, and the others published in the collection *Dreaming America: Voices of Undocumented Youth in Maximum Security Detention* (<http://www.settlementhouse.us>), was written during workshops for immigrant youths in detention led by poet Seth Michelson. Some were created in collaboration with students from Washington and Lee University; others benefitted from visits by guest artists Jimmy Santiago Baca and Ricardo Dominguez. Larry Moffi, publisher of Settlement House Books, brought the book, *Dreaming America* to fruition, and kindly granted permission to set this poem. Profits from the book sales are donated to the Detained Children's Program of the Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition (www.caircoalition.org), to whom I will also donate my royalties. The score is available free of charge (<https://judithshatin.com/la-frontera/>) and choruses are invited to contribute to CAIR in lieu of score purchase. –JS

**La Frontera (The Border)*
Translation by Seth Michelson

*un lugar a que todo el mundo vamos
al tener un sueño
y ver a mi familia feliz*

*pero no nos dejan llegar a la frontera
por ser de otro país*

*y me pregunto por qué
si todos somos seres humanos
somos los mismos
no tenemos papeles
porque estamos en el mismo mundo
tenemos sentimientos iguales*

*el color de piel es diferente
pero eso no quiere decir que no somos iguales
es que en este país en mi país
hay mucha gente racista*

*el ser blanco, el ser negro
no quiere decir*

*que somos iguales
somos todos iguales
tenemos la misma mente
la misma meta*

*el caminar días por el desierto
al inmigrar nos agarra*

*a place the whole world goes
when we dream
and want to see our families happy*

*but they don't let us reach the border
because we're from other countries*

*and I ask myself why
if we're all human beings
if we're all the same
don't we have papers too
because we're all in the same world
have the same feelings*

*though our skin colors may differ
but that doesn't mean we're not the same
it means that in this country in my country
there are lots of racists*

*to be white, to be black
doesn't mean we are unequal*

*we're equal
we have the same thoughts
the same goal*

*to walk for days across the desert
called to immigrate*

**From Dreaming America: Voices of Undocumented Youth in Maximum-Security Detention, used by kind permission of poet Seth Michelson and Larry Moffi, publisher of Settlement House Books, First Edition, ©2017*

La Frontera

Unidentified Detained Immigrant Youth

Judith Shatin

Strong ♩ = 68

Sop. & Alto

Tenor & Bass

Piano

f

La fron -

f

La fron -

5

S/A

T/B

Pno.

te - ra, la fron - te - ra, la fron - te - ra, fron - te - ra, fron -

te - ra, la fron - te - ra, la fron - te - ra, fron - te - ra, fron -

8

S/A

T/B

Pno.

te - ra un lu - gar a que to - do el mun - do va - mos

te - ra un lu - gar a que to - do el mun - do va - mos

S/A *mf*
al te - ner un sue - ño te - ner, un

T/B *mf*
al te - ner un sue - ño te - ner, al te - ner un

Pno. *mf*

S/A *f*
sue - ño y ver a mi fa - mi - lia fe - liz

T/B *f*
sue - ño y ver a mi fa - mi - lia fe - liz

Pno. *f*

S/A *cresc.*
Pe - ro no, pe - ro no, pe - ro no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no,

T/B *cresc.*
Pe - ro no, pe - ro no, pe - ro no, pe - ro no, no, no, no, no,

Pno. *cresc.*

25 *ff* *f*

S/A no, no, no, no, no pe - ro no nos de - jan lle - gar

T/B no, no, no, no, no pe - ro no no de - jan lle - gar

Pno. *ff* *f*

29

S/A a la fron - te - ra por ser de o - tro país

T/B a la fron - te - ra por - ser de o - tro país

Pno.

33 *mf* *mf*

S/A Y me pre - gun - to por qué si to - dos so - mos

T/B Y me pre - gun - to por qué si to - dos so - mos

Pno. *mf*

S/A 37 *f* se - res hu - ma - nos so - mos los mis - mos

T/B se - res hu - ma - nos so - mos los mis - mos

Pno. 37 *f*

S/A 41 no te - ne - mos pa - pe - les, pa - pe - les,

T/B no te - ne - mos pa - pe - les, pa - pe - les,

Pno. 41

S/A 45 *mp* por - que e - sta - mos *mf* te - ne - mos te - ne - mos sen - ti -

T/B *mp* en el mis - mo mun - do *mf* Te - ne - mos, te - ne - mos sen - ti -

Pno. 45 *mp* *mf*

49

S/A mien - tos i - gua - les i - gua - les, i - gua - les *f*

T/B mien - tos i - gua - les i - gua - les, i - gua - les *f*

Pno.

53

S/A *mf* el co - lor de piel *f*

T/B *mf* el co - lor de piel *f*

Pno.

57

S/A es di - fe - ren - te Pe - ro es - so no *f*

T/B es di - fe - ren - te Pe - ro es - so no *f*

Pno.

61 *mf*

S/A

quie - re de - cir que so - mos i - gua - les

T/B

quie - re de - cir que so - mos i - gua - les

Pno.

mf

65 *mf*

S/A

es - que en es - te país en mi

T/B

es - que en es - te país en mi

Pno.

65

69 *f*

S/A

país hay mu - cha gen - te ra -

T/B

país hay mu - cha gen - te ra -

Pno.

69

73

S/A

T/B

Pno.

ff

ff

ff

cis ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta

cis - ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta

77

poco più mosso

S/A

T/B

Pno.

mp

mp

p

mp

el ser blan - co

el ser

Assertive

84

S/A

T/B

Pno.

f

f

f

no quie - re de - cir que so - mos i - gua - les

ne - gro no quie - re de - cir que so - mos i - gua - les

90

S/A

T/B

Pno.

mf

mf

Te - ne - mos la mis - ma men - te, — la mis - ma me - ta —

Te - ne - mos la mis - ma men - te, — la mis - ma me - ta —

Resigned ♩ = 68

95

S/A

T/B

Pno.

mf

Resigned ♩ = 68

103

S/A

T/B

Pno.

mp

p

mp

p

el ca - mi - nar di - as,

el ca - mi - nar di - as,

108 *mp*

S/A ca - mi - nar, ca - mi - nar di - as por el de - sier - to

T/B ca - mi - nar, ca - mi - nar di - as por el de -

108 *mp*

Pno.

115 *mf* *cresc.*

S/A al in - mi - grar nos a -

T/B sier - to al in - mi - grar nos a -

115 *mf* *cresc.*

Pno.

122 *f*

S/A ga - rra nos a - ga - rra, al

T/B ga - rra nos a - ga - rra al

122 *f*

Pno.

126

S/A

T/B

Pno.

mf

in - mi - grar, al ca - mi - nar di - as,

in - mi - grar, al ca - mi - nar di - as,

130

S/A

T/B

Pno.

mp

p

al ca - mi - nar di - as, al ca - mi - nar di - as,

al ca - mi - nar di - as, al ca - mi - nar di - as,

137

S/A

T/B

Pno.

p

pp

n

di - as, di - as.

di - as, di - as.