

Andrea Ramsey

Imaginary Creatures

1. Fairy
2. Mermaid
3. Unicorn
4. Imaginary Friend
5. Dragon

SATB divisi Chorus with Piano



www.andreamsey.com

IMAGINARY CREATURES

1. Fairy (0'49")

*They have fairy dust and fairy friends,
and hair and arms and legs and little shoes.*

*One week they wear the flats,
one week they wear the high heels.*

*They all eat at the fairy café,
they eat lollipops,
ice cream, and
cupcakes –
all sweet treats.*

They don't eat broccoli.

-Blythe & Ewan MacMullen, ages 5 & 8

2. Mermaid (0'59")

Half- human, half- fish.

They live in the ocean,

Or lakes.

They wear a bra under the water.

It's a seashell.

And every night they spread magic across the land,

And that night becomes a great night!

-Coen Linscheid, age 8

-Eleanor McFarland, age 5

3. Unicorn (0'12")

*A unicorn has sparkly hair
and goes NAY NAY!*

*It has special powers
for making sparkle parties.*

-Jackson Fox, age 4

4. Imaginary Friend (1'12")

Some people can't see them, but others can.

My imaginary friend is named Fred.

He has tan-colored skin and he's very nice.

He has golden hair.

Fred can fly.

-Ewan MacMullen, age 8

5. Dragon (1'20")

Dragons can be good or bad.

Either people ride it,

or it is an evil dragon and it just destroys everything.

It goes hhhhhhhhhah!

And it breathes out fire.

I would be friends with a dragon,

if it was a nice one.

If you're friends with a dragon,

you're gonna have a great time!

-Avery & Jackson Fox, ages 7 & 4

-Adam & Coen Linscheid, ages 9 & 8

About the Work

Commissioned by California Choral Directors Association for the 2021 SATB All-State Honor Choir, *Imaginary Creatures* is a lighthearted set of miniatures—each movement presents a child’s description of the title creature. With 2020 and 2021 being such challenging years, I found myself with a greater need for joy and laughter in my own world and guessed that others might feel similarly. I have also always loved writing in miniature form (*Three Quotes by Mark Twain, Gems of J.M. Barrie, My Mother’s Words, and TwainSong*). There is something so satisfying about the compact nature of small writes. Beyond the delight of creating a whole world or telling a story in 12 to 90 seconds, they also appeal to my desire for variety (sometimes I get bored easily ☺).

After searching several books (both prose and poetry) and struggling to find the right kind of texts I was seeking, I thought of how many dear friends I have who with young children (or grandchildren.) Kids are both hilarious and richly imaginative, so why not ask my friends to interview their children about these creatures? I sent the request (along with a series of questions and compensation for their time) and in return, my friends sent me links to adorable videos of their children/grandchildren talking about fairies, mermaids, unicorns, imaginary friends, dragons, and werewolves. I transcribed the interviews, and began selecting the most imaginative and humorous tidbits to assemble as the texts in this work. You’ll notice werewolf did not make the cut. Not for lack of material, but rather I had so much material that I decided to save that idea for a standalone work about werewolves at some point down the road.

In performing the work, singers and conductor are invited to think creatively about presentation. It might be especially effective to have small children read the text before each movement to give the audience a clear understanding that these are the words of children. Almost every movement has something humorous, dramatic, tender or silly to express. Singers should seek to be storytellers with their facial expressions and personal engagement. Some light staging or movement might also be appropriate in certain movements. Clear enunciation of the text will help convey the humor, especially in moments like “*they don’t eat broccoli*” in *Fairy*, etc. So, express, articulate, emote, and invite the audience into the joy/terror/magic/whimsy of these imaginary creatures.

About the Composer

Dr. Andrea Ramsey enjoys an international presence as a composer, conductor, scholar, and music educator. Her teaching experiences range from work with adolescent and children's voices to high school and collegiate voices. She enjoys regular opportunities to conduct all-state and divisional level honor choirs, and festival events at Carnegie Hall, and abroad. Before leaping into full time composing and guest conducting, Andrea held positions in music education and choral conducting at The Ohio State University and the University of Colorado, respectively.

An ASCAPlus award-winning composer with over 130 works in print, she is a native of Arkansas, and has experienced in her own life the power of music to provide a sense of community, better understanding of our humanity, and rich opportunities for self-discovery.

Imaginary Creatures

SATB divisi Chorus with Piano

1. Fairy

Text by
Blythe and Ewan MacMullen, (ages 5 & 8)

Music by
Andrea Ramsey

Swing it (♩ = ca. 102 - 110) ♩ = ♩³♩

Soprano
Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

mf They have fai - ry dust and

mp fingersnaps Fai - ry dust, —

mp fingersnaps Fai - ry dust — and

mf

mp

4

fai - ry friends, and hair and arms and legs and lit - tle shoes: _____

mf fai - ry friends, hair and arms and legs and lit - tle shoes:

mf fai - ry friends and hair and arms and legs and lit - tle shoes: _____

7

S one week— they wear the flats, one week— they wear the high -

A they wear the flats *div.*

T they wear the flats

B they wear the flats

10

heels! They all eat— at the fai - ry ca - fe, they eat lol -

they wear the high-heels!— They all eat— at the fai - ry ca - fe, they eat lol -

they wear the high-heels!— Fai - ries all eat, fai - ry ca - fe, —

they wear the high - heels— Fai - ry ca - fe, —

Fast gliss, fall-off mf

unis. mf

fingersnaps mp

fingersnaps mp

13

- li - pops, ice - cream, and cup - cakes... — All sweet treats!

- li - pops, ice - cream, and cup cakes... — All sweet treats!

lol - li - pops and cup - cakes... — All sweet treats!

— pops and cup - cakes... — All sweet treats!

13

rit. ----- Grandiose (♩=76)

17 *f* All sweet treats! They don't eat broc - co-li!

div. f All sweet treats! They don't eat broc - co-li!

f All sweet treats! They don't eat broc - co-li!

f All sweet treats! They don't eat broc - co-li!

rit. ----- Grandiose (♩=76)

17 *8va*

2. Mermaid

Text by
Coen Linscheid, (age 8)
Eleanor McFarland, (age 5)

Music by
Andrea Ramsey

Undulating, rubato (♩ = 72 - 78)

mp *mf*

Soprano
Alto
Tenor
Bass

Half - hu-man, half - fish. They live in the o - cean, or

mp *mf*

Half - hu-man, half - fish. They live in the o - cean, or

mp *mf*

Half - hu-man, half - fish. They

mp *mf*

Half - hu-man, half - fish. They

Undulating, rubato (♩ = 72 - 78)

p

Piano

5 *mf*

lakes. And

lakes. They wear a bra un - der the wa - ter, it's a sea-shell

live in the o - cean, or lakes. They wear a bra un - der the wa - ter, it's a sea-shell

live in the o - cean, or lakes.

5

rit. ----- Slightly slower (♩=68)

10

ev - ery night, they spread ma-gic a-cross the land, And
 a-cross the land, And
 a-cross the land, And
 a-cross the land, And

p *mp* *mf*

rit. ----- Slightly slower (♩=68)

10

Tempo Primo (♩=72 - 78)

14

that night be-comes a great night!
 that night be-comes a great night!
 that night be-comes a great night!
 that night be-comes a great night!

ff

Tempo Primo (♩=72 - 78)

14

3. Unicorn

Text by
Jackson Fox, (age 4)

Music by
Andrea Ramsey

Quick gallop (♩ = ca. 108)

mp buoyant with crisp consonants

Soprano Alto
Tenor Bass

A u - ni - corn has spark - ly hair and

Quick gallop (♩ = ca. 108)

Piano

S
A
T
B

goes: NAY* NAY!* It has spe - cial pow - ers

goes: NAY* NAY!* It has spe - cial pow - ers

goes: NAY* NAY!* It has spe - cial pow - ers

goes: NAY* NAY!* for ma - king spark - le par - ties.

* Toss hair and shake head from side to side. Sing roughly at pitch, but with a fast vibrato that mimics the neighing of a horse.
Conductor can take lots of time on the gliss.

0'12"
October 2021
Kansas City, MO 64108

4. Imaginary Friend

Text by
Ewan MacMullen, (age 8)

Music by
Andrea Ramsey

Rubato, gently (♩ = 78 - 86)

mp

Soprano
Some peo - ple can't see them, but oth - ers

mp

Alto
Some peo - ple can't see them, but oth - ers

Tenor

Bass

Rubato, gently (♩ = 78 - 86)

p

Piano

5 *mp*

can. My im - ag - i - nar - y friend is

mp

can. My im - ag - i - nar - y friend is

pp *mp*

but oth - ers can, My im - ag - i - nar - y

pp

but o - thers can,

5

a tempo

9 *mp* // *mf* *mf*

named: _____ Fred He has tan - colored

named, is named Fred He has tan - colored

8 friend is named _____ His name is Fred, He's ve - ry nice.

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

My friend is named His name is Fred, He's ve - ry nice.

a tempo

8^{va}-

9

13

skin, _____ He has gol - den hair,

skin, _____ He has gol - den hair, _____

8 *mf* *mf* *mp* *mp*

Fred He has gol - den hair, His name is Fred,

Fred He has gol - den hair, His name is Fred,

8^{va}-

13

rit. ----- a tempo

17 *p* *mp*

fly, — fly, — fly, — fly, —

mp

fly,

stagger breathing

He's ve - ry nice. Fred — can fly.

He's ve - ry nice. Fred — can fly, fly, — fly, —

mp

rit. ----- a tempo

17 *loco*

22 rit. -----

fly, — fly — fly, — fly — fly, — fly —

fly, — fly, — fly, —

His name is Fred,

fly, — fly, — His name is Fred,

mp

mp

22 rit. -----

mf

5. Dragon

Text by
Avery and Jackson Fox, (ages 7 & 4)
Adam and Coen Linscheid, (ages 9 & 8)

Music by
Andrea Ramsey

Broadly (♩=76) **rit.** ----- **With fire** (♩=120) **Broadly** (♩=76)

f **sfz** **ff** **mf**

Soprano
Dra - gons can be good or bad Ei - ther peo - ple

Alto
Dra - gons can be good or bad Ei - ther peo - ple

Tenor
Dra - gons can be good or bad Ei - ther peo - ple

Bass
Dra - gons can be good or bad Ei - ther peo - ple

f **fff** **mf**

Piano
Broadly (♩=76) **rit.** ----- **With fire** (♩=120) **Broadly** (♩=76)

With fire (♩=120)

rit. -----

6 *mp* *f* *pp*

ride it, Or it is an e - vil dra-gon, Oo

ride it, Or it is an e - vil dra-gon, Oo

ride it, and it just de - stroy - eve - ry -

ride it, and it just de - stroy - eve - ry -

mf *mf*

With fire (♩=120)

rit. -----

6 *mp* *ff* *mp* *f*

mp

Broadly (♩=76)

Scream

10 *f* *mp* ****

E - vil dra-gon! It goes: Hhhhh Ah!

E - vil dra-gon! It goes: Hhhhh Ah!

thing It goes: Hhhhh Ah!

thing It goes: Hhhhh Ah!

f *mp* *mp* *mp* **** **** **** ****

Broadly (♩=76)

8^{vb} -----

* Separate destroys & everything with slight glottal attack.

** entire chorus makes an open-mouthed hissing sound (no ss sounds) just open-mouthed breathing, unpitched, but with crescendo and an accented finish on an unpitched/unvoiced "ah." Scream to follow should be performed by a maximum of one scream soloist in each section (8 voices, max) and should be on the beat, quickly released, and blood-curdling. (This is a reactionary scream in fear of the evil dragon.)

14

And it breathes out fire

8va

17 rit. ----- a tempo

Solo *mf* with dramatic excitement, as much acting as singing
molto rubato, rhythmically free, like recit.

I would be friends with a dragon, if it was a nice one!

17 rit. ----- a tempo

loco tr l.h. r.h. mp lightly, playfully

