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JULIANA HALL

NIGHT DANCES

6 Songs for Soprano and Piano

on Poems by
Elizabeth Bishop,
Emily Brontë,
Emily Dickinson,
and Edna St. Vincent Millay

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NIGHT DANCES was commissioned by the Schubert Club of Saint Paul, Minnesota for soprano Dawn Upshaw, who along with pianist Margo Garrett premiered the song cycle at the McKnight Theatre in Saint Paul, Minnesota on Tuesday, December 8, 1987.

Cover design by David Sims.

THE CRICKET SANG

The cricket sang,
 And set the sun,
 And workmen finished, one by one,
 Their seam the day upon.
 The low grass loaded with the dew,
 The twilight stood as strangers do
 With hat in hand, polite and new,
 To stay as if, or go.
 A vastness, as a neighbor, came, —
 A wisdom without face or name,
 A peace, as hemispheres at home, —
 And so the night became.

—Emily Dickinson

SOME THINGS ARE DARK

Some things are dark—or think they are.
 But, in comparison to me,
 All things are light enough to see
 In any place, at any hour.
 For I am Nightmare: where I fly,
 Terror and rain stand in the sky
 So thick, you could not tell them from
 That blackness out of which you come.
 So much for “where I fly”: but when
 I strike, and clutch in claw the brain—
 Erebus, to such brain, will seem
 The thin blue dusk of pleasant dream.

—Edna St. Vincent Millay

SONG

This shall be thy lullaby
 Rocking on the stormy sea,
 Though it roar in thunder wild,
 Sleep, stilly sleep, my dark-haired child.
 When our shuddering boat was crossing
 Eldern’s lake so rudely tossing,
 Then ‘twas first my nursling smiled;
 Sleep, softly sleep, my fair-browed child.
 Waves above thy cradle break,
 Foamy tears are on thy cheek,
 Yet the Ocean’s self grows mild
 When it bears my slumbering child.

—Emily Brontë

SLEEP, MOURNER, SLEEP!

Sleep, mourner, sleep! — I cannot sleep,
 My weary mind still wanders on;
 Then silent weep — I cannot weep,
 For eyes and tears are turned to stone.

—Emily Brontë

A SPIDER SEWED AT NIGHT

A spider sewed at night
 Without a light
 Upon an arc of white.
 If ruff it was of dame
 Or shroud of gnome,
 Himself, himself inform.
 Of immortality
 His strategy
 Was physiognomy.

—Emily Dickinson

SONNET

I am in need of music that would flow
 Over my fretful, feeling finger-tips,
 Over my bitter-tainted, trembling lips,
 With melody, deep, clear, and liquid-slow.
 Oh, for the healing swaying, old and low,
 Of some song sung to rest the tired dead,
 A song to fall like water on my head,
 And over quivering limbs, dream flushed to glow!

There is a magic made by melody:
 A spell of rest, and quiet breath, and cool
 Heart, that sinks through fading colors deep
 To the subaqueous stillness of the sea,
 And floats forever in a moon-green pool,
 Held in the arms of rhythm and of sleep.

—Elizabeth Bishop

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For my very dear friends, Michael Dennis Browne and Lisa McLean

Night Dances

for Soprano and Piano

The cricket sang

Emily Dickinson

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)

Serenely (♩ = 66)

mp

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

5

mp

Ped.

“The cricket sang” by Emily Dickinson (Edited by Mabel Loomis Todd) is in the Public Domain.

8 *ppp* *mp*

The crick - et sang, And set the

mp

* Ped. * Ped. *

12 *mp* $\text{♩} = 88$

sun, And work-men fin-ished, one by one, Their seam the day up - on.

$\text{♩} = 88$

p

Ped. * Ped. *

16 *p*

The low grass load-ed with the dew,

p

mp

Ped. * Ped.

Some Things Are Dark

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)With suspense and anxiety ($\text{♩} = 112$)*pp* **Whispered**

Some things are dark or think they are.

But, in comparison to me,

All things are light enough to see In any place, at any hour.

pp **Whispered**

pp

Ped.

3

* *Ped.* *

4

Ped. * *Ped.* *

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Song

Emily Brontë

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)

With tenderness (♩ = 126) *mf*

This shall be thy
lul - la - by Rock - ing on the
storm - y sea, Though it roar in

mp

gliss. gliss. gliss. gliss.

Accelerando

Accelerando

“Song” by Emily Brontë is in the Public Domain.

7 *ff* **Rit.**-----

thun - - der wild,

9 **Tempo I** *p* **Rit.**-----

Sleep, stily sleep, my

pp *p*

Ped. * **Ped.** * **Ped.** * **Ped.** *

12 **A little slower** **Rit.**----- **Tempo I** **Accelerando**

dark - haired child.

mp *pp*

Sleep, mourner, sleep!

Emily Brontë

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)

Impassioned (♩ = 63)

f *mp*

Sleep, _____ mourn - er, sleep! _____ I can - not _____

f *f* *p*

Ped. *

4

sleep, _____ My wear - y mind _____ still

mp

Lots of breath

7 *ppp* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*

wan - ders on; _____

ppp

Ped. *

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A spider sewed at night

Emily Dickinson

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)

Quietly, carefully (♩ = 80)

p

A spi-der sewed at

night With-out a light Up-on an-

arc of white.

Rit. A tempo

Rit. A tempo

mp *p* *mp*

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Sonnet

Elizabeth Bishop

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)With warmth, freely ($\text{♩} = 69$)

mp *mf*

3

I am in need of mu - sic that would flow ——— O - ver my

3

fret - ful, — feel - ing fin - ger - tips, O - ver my bit - ter - taint - ed, trem - bling

p 3

6

mp

lips, With mel - o - dy, — deep, clear, and li - quid - slow.

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11 *mp*

Oh, for the heal-ing sway-ing, old and low, Of some song_ sung to rest_ the

14

tired_ dead, — A song to fall_ like wa-ter on my head, And

17

o - ver qui-ver-ing limbs, dream flushed to glow!

Ped. *