

**PRESSER
PREMIERE**
S E R I E S

Stacy Garrop

My Dearest Ruth

*for Soprano, Clarinet in B \flat ,
Violin, Violoncello, and Piano*



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Program Note
by James Ginsburg

The letter on which *My Dearest Ruth* is based was my father's last written statement. My parents celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary in my father's room at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore on Wednesday, June 23, 2010. The following day, my mother called to say Dad had taken a turn for the worse. I flew to Baltimore the next morning (Friday) and met Mom at Dad's room. The doctors came in and told us there was nothing more they could do — the cancer had progressed too far. All this time, Dad kept repeating one word: "Home." So we made arrangements to bring him back to our apartment in Washington, D.C. While collecting his belongings from the hospital room, Mom pulled open the drawer next to Dad's bed and discovered a yellow legal pad on which Dad had written this a week earlier:

6/17/10

My Dearest Ruth –

You are the only person I have loved in my life, setting aside, a bit, parents and kids and their kids, and I have admired and loved you almost since the day we first met at Cornell some 56 years ago.

What a treat it has been to watch you progress to the very top of the legal world!!

I will be in JH Medical Center until Friday, June 25, I believe, and between then and now I shall think hard on my remaining health and life, and whether on balance the time has come for me to tough it out or to take leave of life because the loss of quality now simply overwhelms. I hope you will support where I come out, but I understand you may not. I will not love you a jot less.

Marty

I should note one factual error: my parents met 59 years before the date of this letter, not 56. Obviously, Dad had their 56th anniversary in mind. We chose to keep the number 56 in the song.

My sister, Jane, and I commissioned Stacy Garrop to adapt the letter and set it to music as one of three songs by different women composers to be presented in 2013 as an 80th birthday tribute to our mother, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Soprano Patrice Michaels sang the premiere at the Supreme Court with pianist Dana Brown on Saturday, April 6, 2013.

-J.G.

Composer's note: Slight alterations have been made to the original text: specific dates and locations were left out in order to create a more timeless feel; a few longer sentences were broken into shorter sentences; and the repetition of "not a jot" was added at the end for dramatic effect.

Text used by permission of the Ginsburg family.

Also available for Soprano and Piano (111-40286).

My Dearest Ruth

Text by
Martin Ginsburg

Stacy Garrop
Winter 2013

Arranged 2018 by composer

♩ = 60 *Lovingly; freely*

Musical score for Soprano, Clarinet in Bb, Violin, Violoncello, and Piano. The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of two sharps (D major). The tempo is marked "Lovingly; freely" with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *p* (piano). Performance instructions include "Mute on" and "Sempre legato".

Soprano: My dear - est Ruth, —

Clarinet in Bb: *Sempre legato*

Violin: *Mute on*, *Sempre legato*, *pp*

Violoncello: *Mute on*, *Sempre legato*, *pp*

Piano: *Sempre legato*, *pp*

Musical score for Soprano, Clarinet, Violin, Violoncello, and Piano. The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of two sharps (D major). The tempo is marked "Lovingly; freely" with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *p* (piano). Performance instructions include "Mute on" and "Sempre legato".

Sop.: You are the on - ly per - son I have loved in my life, —

Cl.: *Sempre legato*

Vln.: *Mute on*, *Sempre legato*, *pp*

Vc.: *Mute on*, *Sempre legato*, *pp*

Pno.: *Sempre legato*, *pp*

15

Sop. *3* *3* *3*
set-ting a-side, a bit, par-ents and kids and their kids.

Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

20

Sop. I have ad-mired and loved you

Cl. *p* *mp* *p*

Vln. *p* *mp* *p*

Vc. *p* *mp* *p*

Pno. *p* *mp* *p*

25 *mp* *mf* *mp*

Sop. *mp* *mf* *mp*
al - most from the day_ we first met some fif-ty-six years* a - go.

Cl. *mp* *mf* *mp*

Vln. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mp*
Mute off Pizz. - bring out

Vc. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mp*
Mute off Pizz. - bring out

Pno. *mp* *mf* *mp* *p*

29 *p*

Sop. *p*
What a treat it has been What a treat it has

Cl. *p*

Vln. *p* (Pizz.) Arco *p* Pizz. *mp* Arco *p*

Vc. *p* (Pizz.) Arco *p* Pizz. *mp* Arco *p*

Pno. *p*

* While they were married for 56 years, Marty and Ruth first met 59 years before the date of his writing.

35

Sop. *mp*
 been to watch you pro - gress to the ver-y top of the le-gal world!!

Cl. *mp*

Vln. *Pizz. mp* *mf* *mp* *Arco*

Vc. *Pizz. mp* *mf* *mp*

Pno. *mp*

Ped. Ped.

38

Sop. to the ver-y top of the le-gal world!!

Cl. *Slightly separate repeated pitches*

Vln. *8va*

Vc. *(Pizz.)* *Arco (mp)*

Pno. *Ped.* *Ped.* *Pedal freely*