

Strange Voices
Sing Among
the
Planets

SSATB and Piano

Peter
Fischer

poem by Christina Rossetti

About the Work

The text is a mysterious and beautiful poem by Christina Rossetti—at times dark and fathomless, and at others energetic, earth-based, and universal in its affirmation of light over darkness, and of the spirit-life out beyond what Rossetti (or any of us) can know.

The piano is an integral part of expressing this wonderful text—it serves as both sparks of light and as a dark underpinning to the entire work. The setting is also available in SSA and SSAA arrangements (both with piano).

Strange voices sing among the planets which
Move on forever; in the old sea's foam
There is a prophecy; in Heaven's blue dome
Great beacon fires are lighted; black as pitch
Is night, and yet star jewels make it rich;
And if the moon lights up her cloudy home
The darkness flees, and forth strange gleamings roam
Lighting up hill and vale and mound and ditch.
Earth is full of all questions that all ask;
And she alone of heavy silence full
Answereth not: what is it severeth
Us from the spirits that we would be with?
Or is it that our fleshly ear is dull,
And our own shadow hides light with a mask?

Christina Rossetti

About the Composer

Peter Fischer is Associate Professor of Music at Texas Tech University where he teaches theory and composition. His works have been performed nationally and internationally. He was named the Grand Prize winner of the 2008 International Society of Bassists Solo Division for his Sonata for Contrabass and Piano. Recent choral and vocal works include:

Twilight (SSAATTBB)

Echo (SSATB/SSA/SSAA and Piano)

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets (SSATB/SSA/SSAA and Piano)

O Magnum Mysterium (SSATBB)

The Sea Is Calm Tonight (SATB *divisi* and Piano)

Let It Be Forgotten (SATB *divisi*)

Never Again (SATB)

A chamber opera based on Gesualdo—*O D'Amarti O Morire* (in English)

Barcarole, a song cycle (mezzo soprano and piano)

www.crystallineskymusic.com

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets

for SSATB and Piano

Christina Rossetti

Peter Fischer
2010

Lento ♩ = 64

8^{va} *loco poco allarg.* *molto espr.* 1 2

ppp *pp* 3 5

con ped.

a tempo 4 *pp*

S 1 Strange voic - es sing a - mong the plan-ets which

S 2 Strange voic - es sing a - mong the plan-ets which

A Strange voic - es sing a - mong the plan-ets which

T Strange voic - es sing a - mong the plan-ets which

B Strange voic - es sing a - mong the plan-ets which

a tempo 4 *p* *mp*

Pno.

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets

7

S 1
Move on for ev - - - er;

S 2
Move on for ev - - - er;

A
Move on for ev - - - er;

T
8
Move on for ev - - - er;

B
Move on for ev - - - er;

Pno.

7

p *pp*

10

S 1
mp
in the old sea's foam There is a proph -

S 2
mp
in the old sea's foam There is a proph -

A
mp
in the old sea's foam There is a proph -

T
8
mp
in the old sea's foam

B
mp
in the old sea's foam

Pno.

10

mp *pp* *mp*

5 4

12

S 1
- - e - cy; _____ in Heav - en's blue dome _____

S 2
- - e - cy; _____ in Heav - en's blue dome _____

A
- - e - cy; _____ in Heav - en's blue dome _____

T
8
There is a proph - - - - e - cy; _____ in

B
There is a proph - - - - e - cy; _____ in

Pno.
12
sopra

14

S 1
f
Great bea-con fires are light-ed; _____ (light -

S 2
f
Great bea-con fires are light-ed; _____ (light -

A
f
Great bea-con fires are light-ed; _____ (light -

T
8
Heav-en's blue dome _____ *f*
Great bea-con fires are light - ed; _____

B
Heav-en's blue dome _____ *f*
Great bea-con fires are light - ed; _____

Pno.
14

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets

17

S 1 *pp* *ppp*
 - - - ed) black as pitch (black as pitch) Is

S 2 *pp* *ppp*
 - - - ed) black as pitch (black as pitch) Is

A *pp* *ppp*
 - - - ed) black as pitch (black as pitch) Is

T *pp* *ppp*
 (light - ed) black as pitch (black as pitch) Is

B *pp* *ppp*
 (light - ed) black as pitch (black as pitch) Is

Pno.

17

pp

3 4 3 4 4 5
 1

3 4
 1

4 5

20

S 1 *mp* *mp cresc.*
 night, and yet

S 2 *mp* *mp cresc.*
 night, and yet

A *mp*

T *p*

B *p*

Pno.

20

4 5

3
 2
 1

Bb

22 *mf*

S 1 star jewels make it rich;

S 2 star jewels make it rich;

A *mp cresc.* star jewels make it rich;

T *mp cresc.* and yet star jewels make it rich; *f*

B *mp cresc.* and yet star jewels make it rich; *f*

Pno. *mp* *mf*

24 *mf* *f*

S 1 And if the moon lights up her cloudy home The

S 2 And if the moon lights up her cloudy home The

A *mf* And if the moon lights up her cloudy home

T *mf* And if the moon lights up her cloudy home (dark - ness)

B *mf* And if the moon lights up her cloudy home (dark - ness)

Pno. *mf* *p*

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets

27

S 1 *mf* dark - ness flees, and forth strange gleam - ings roam

S 2 *mf* dark - ness flees, and forth strange gleam - ings roam

A *f* *mf* The dark - ness flees, and forth strange gleam - ings roam

T *f* *mf* flees), The dark - ness flees, and forth strange gleam - ings roam

B *mf* flees), The dark - ness flees, and forth strange gleam - ings roam

Pno. *mf* *mf*

29

S 1 Light - ing up hill and

S 2 (forth strange gleam - ings roam) Light - ing up hill and

A (forth strange gleam - ings roam) Light - ing up hill and

T (forth strange gleam - ings roam) Light - ing up hill and

B Light - ing up hill and

Pno.

31

S 1 *f*
vale and mound and ditch,

S 2 *f*
vale and mound and ditch,

A *f*
vale and mound and ditch,

T *f*
vale and mound and ditch,

B *f*
vale and mound and ditch,

Pno. *f*

33

S 1 *ff* *dim.* *mp*
Earth is full of all questions that all ask;

S 2 *ff* *dim.* *mp*
Earth is full of all questions that all ask;

A *ff* *dim.* *mp*
Earth is full of all questions that all ask;

T *ff* *dim.*
Earth is full of all questions that all

B *ff* *dim.*
Earth is full of all questions that all

Pno. *ff* *mp*

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets

36 *rit.* *a tempo*

S 1

S 2

A

T *mp*
ask;

B *mp*
ask;

Pno.

36 *rit.* *a tempo*

ppp

3

5

39 *p*

S 1
And she _____ a-lone _____ of heav - y si -

S 2 *p*
And she _____ a-lone _____ of heav - y si -

A *p*
And she _____ a-lone _____ of heav - y si -

T *p*
And she _____ a-lone _____ of heav - y si -

B *p*
And she _____ a-lone _____ of heav - y si -

Pno.

39 *molto espr.*

pp

5

p

5

42

S 1
- lence full _____ Answ - er - eth not: _____

S 2
- lence full _____ Answ - er - eth not: _____

A
- lence full _____ Answ - er - eth not: _____

T
8 - lence full _____ Answ - er - eth not: _____

B
- lence full _____ Answ - er - eth not: _____

Pno.

44 *mp*

S 1
what is it sev - er - eth _____ Us from the spir -

S 2
mp
what is it sev - er - eth _____ Us from the spir -

A
mp
what is it sev - er - eth _____ Us from the spir -

T
8 _____ *mp*
what sev - er - eth _____

B
_____ *mp*
what sev - er - eth _____

Pno.

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets

46 *mf*

S 1 *mf* its that we would be with? *dim.*

S 2 *mf* its that we would be with? *dim.*

A *mf* its that we would be with? *dim.*

T *mf* 8 Us from the spir - - - its that we would be with? *dim.*

B *mf* Us from the spir - - - its that we would be with? *dim.*

Pno. *mf* 3

48 *pp*

S 1 *pp* Or is it that our flesh - ly ear is dull,

S 2 *pp* Or is it that our flesh - ly ear is dull,

A *pp* Or is it that our flesh - ly ear is dull,

T *pp* 8 Or is it that our flesh - ly ear is dull,

B *pp* Or is it that our flesh - ly ear is dull,

Pno. *pp* 4 2 3

51 *mp* *p*

S 1 And our own shad - ow hides light

S 2 And our own shad - ow hides light

A And our own shad - ow hides light

T 8 And our own shad - ow hides light

B And our own shad - ow hides light

Pno. *mp* *p*

54 *pp*

S 1 - with a mask? And our own shad -

S 2 - with a mask? And our own shad -

A - with a mask? And our own shad -

T 8 - with a mask? And our own shad -

B - with a mask? And our own shad -

Pno. *pp*

2 1 2 4

Strange Voices Sing Among the Planets

57 *rit.* *a tempo*

S 1
ow hides light with a

S 2
ow hides light with a

A
ow hides light with a

T
ow hides light with a

B
ow hides light with a

57 *rit.* *a tempo*

Pno.
ppp

60 *pp* (*poco cresc.*) *rit.*

S 1
mask?

S 2
mask?

A
mask?

T
mask?

B
mask?

60 *pp* *molto espr.* *rit.*

Pno.