

TAKE MY HAND

PETER FISCHER

CONRAD AIKEN



About the Work

Dedicated to Alan Zabriskie and the Texas Tech University Choir, the work sets a small fragment of the poem *The Divine Pilgrim* by Conrad Aiken. The theme of love, both in the now and in the remembrances of long ago establish a sense of imagery that was part of the discussion about writing the work and the thematic idea of the concert on which it would premiere. I had used Aiken's poetry before and loved his use of imagery and musical metaphor. The fragment here takes on a life of its own apart from the larger poem and fits beautifully in what I was looking for in a text about the aspect of lost love and found love. The depths of emotion within a choir setting are explored throughout, with melody and harmonic color equally designed into the music. Contrapuntal and chordal settings are interspersed creating an everchanging sense of choral flow leading to the exclamation point on the last line. The work is set for unaccompanied SATB *divisi* choir.

Take My Hand

Take my hand, then, walk with me
By the white shadowy crashings of a sea
Down miles on miles of glistening mirrorlike sand,—
Take my hand
And walk with me once more by crumbling walls;
Up mouldering stairs where grey-stemmed ivy clings,
To hear forgotten bells, as evening falls,
Rippling above us invisibly their slowly widening rings. . . .
Take my hand: your face is one I know,
I loved you, long ago:
You are like music, long forgotten, suddenly come to mind;
You are like spring returned through snow.
Once, I know, I walked with you in starlight,
And many nights I slept and dreamed of you;
Come, let us climb once more these stairs of starlight,
This midnight stream of cloud-flung blue! . . .
Music murmurs beneath us like a sea,
And faints to a ghostly whisper . . . Come with me!

Conrad Aiken

From *House of Dust* (1916-17), Book III of *The Divine Pilgrim*

About the Composer

Originally from the San Francisco area and for twenty years in the Chicago area, Peter Fischer is currently Associate Professor of Music at Texas Tech University where he teaches composition, computer music, and theory. His works have been performed nationally and internationally. Recent choral and vocal works include

Twilight (SATB *divisi*)

Peace (SATB *divisi* and Piano)

I Would Live In Your Love (SATB minimal *divisi* and Piano)

Echo (SSATB/SSA/SSAA and Piano)

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

Leave It Better (for Richard Bjella) (SATB *divisi*)

O Magnum Mysterium (SSATBB)

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

Let It Be Forgotten (SATB *divisi*)

Never Again (SATB *divisi*)

A chamber opera based on Gesualdo—*O D'Amarti O Morire*

(now being developed into a full-length opera)

Barcarole (a song cycle for mezzo soprano and piano)

for Alan Zabriskie
and the Texas Tech University Choir

Take My Hand

Conrad Aiken

Peter Fischer

for unaccompanied SATB divisi

Lentissimo *p*

Soprano: Take my hand, then,

Alto: Take my hand, then, walk with

Tenor: Take my hand, Take my hand, then,

Bass: Take my hand, then, walk

Lentissimo
for rehearsal only

7 *p* *mp* *pp*

S: Take my hand, then, walk with me Ah

A: *tutti* me Take my hand, then, walk with me By the

T: Take my hand, then, walk with me Take my hand, then, walk with me By the

B: with me Ah

Take My Hand

10 *mf* *pp*

S sha-dow-y crash - ings of a sea Down miles on

A *mf* *pp*
white sha-dow-y crash - ings of a sea Down miles on miles

T *mf* *p* *pp*
white sha-dow-y crash - ings of a sea Down miles on miles on

B *mf* *pp*
sha-dow-y crash - ings of a sea Down miles on miles

14 *mp* *pp*

S miles on miles of glist-en - ing glist - en - ing mir - ror - like

A on miles on miles of glist-en-ing glist-en - ing mir - ror - like

T *mp* *p* *mp*
miles on miles on miles of glist-en - ing glist-en-ing mir-ror like

B on miles on miles of glist - en - ing mir - ror - like

18

S sand,—

A sand,—

T sand,— Take my hand, then, Take my hand And walk with me

B sand,— Take my hand Take my hand And

18

22

S Take my hand And

A Take my hand And walk with me once more

T Take my hand And walk with me once more

B walk with me Take my hand

22

Take My Hand

25 *mf* *p*

S walk with me once more once more by crumb-ling

A And walk with me once more once more by crumb-ling

T And walk with me once more by crumb-ling walls;

B And walk with me once more once more by crumb-ling

25 *mf* *pp*

28 *pp* *rit.* *a tempo* *mp*

S walls; Up mould-er-ing stairs where grey-stemmed iv-y

A walls; Up mould-er-ing stairs where grey-stemmed iv-y

T Up mould-er-ing stairs where grey-stemmed i-vy

B walls; Up mould-er-ing stairs where grey-stemmed i-vy

28 *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *mp* *rit.* *a tempo*

32 *p* *pp* *ppp*

S iv - y clings To hear for - got - ten for - got - ten bells,

A iv - y clings To hear for - got - ten for - got - ten bells,

T clings To hear for - got - ten

B clings To hear for - got - ten

36 *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

S as even - ing falls, rip - pling a - bove us in -

A as even - ing even - ing falls, rip - pling a - bove us in -

T bells, as even - ing falls rip - pling a - bove us in -

B bells, as even - ing falls rip - pling a - bove us in -

Take My Hand

40

S vis - i - bly their slow - ly wid - en - ing rings... Take my hand: your face is

A vis - i - bly their slow - ly wid - en - ing rings... Take my hand: your face is

T vis - i - bly their slow - ly wid - en - ing rings... Take my

B vis - i - bly their rings... Take my

mf *f* *mp* (*sotto voce*)

44

S one I know, I loved you, long a - go: I loved

A one I know, I loved you, long a - go: I loved

T hand: I loved you, I loved you, long a - go: I

B hand: I loved you, I loved you, long a - go: I

mf *f* *mf* *f*

48

S
— you, long — a - go: *rit.*
pp You are like mus - ic,

A
— you, long — a - go: *pp* You are like mus - ic,
pp *altos in 3* You are like mus - ic,

T
8 loved you, — long a - go: *pp* You are like mus - ic,

B
loved you, — long a - go: *pp* You are like mus - ic,
pp You are like mus - ic,

48 *rit.*

52 *a tempo*

S *pp* mus - ic, *f* You are like mus - ic, *f* long for-got - ten, —

A *p* You are like mus - ic, *pp* long for - got - ten, —

altos in 2

A *p* You are like mus - ic, *pp* long for-got - ten, —

T *p* You — are like mus - ic, *pp* long for-got - ten, —

T *p* You are like mus - ic, — like mus - ic, *pp* long for - got - ten, —

B *p* You — are like mus - ic, *pp* long for - got - ten, —

B *p* You are like mus - - - ic, *pp* long for-got -

52 *a tempo*

56

S *f* sud - den - ly come to mind; *pp*

A *mp* sud - den - ly come *pp* come to mind;

A *mp* sud - den - ly come *pp* to mind;

T *mp* sud - den ly come *pp* to mind;

T *mp* sud - den - ly come *pp* to mind;

B *mp* sud - den ly come to mind; *pp* to mind;

B *mp* ten, sud - den - ly come to mind; *pp* to mind;

56

60 *mp* *ppp*

S You are like spring re - turned through snow snow

A *mp tutti* *ppp*
You are like spring re - turned through snow snow

T *tutti mp* *pp*
You are like spring re - turned through snow. Once,

B *tutti mp* *pp*
You are like spring re - turned through snow. Once,

un poco piu mosso

65 *pp* *p*

S Once, I know, I walked with you in star - light, And man - y

A *pp* *pp*
Once, I know, I walked with you in star - light, And man - y

T *pp*
I know, I walked with you in star - light, And man - y

B *pp*
I know, I walked with you in star - light, And

un poco piu mosso

68 *mp*

S nights I slept and dreamed and slept and dreamed of you;

A nights I slept and dreamed of you; Come

T nights I slept and dreamed of you; Ah

B man - y nights I slept and dreamed of you; Come

piu mosso ♩ = 72

72 *f*

S Come, let us climb once more these steps of star - light,

A *mp* climb these steps of star - light,

T *f* Come let us climb once more these steps of star - light,

B *mp* climb these steps of star - light,

72 *piu mosso* ♩ = 72

Take My Hand

76 *mp* *rit.*

S Come, let us climb once more — these stairs of star - light,

A Come, let us climb once more — these stairs of star - light,

T *mp* *p* Come, let us climb once more — these stairs of star - light, This

B *mp* *p* Come, let us climb once more — these stairs — of star - light, This

80 *Lentissimo* *p* *f*

S This mid - night — stream — of cloud - flung blue!...

A This mid - night — stream — of cloud - flung blue!...

T mid - night stream — of cloud - flung blue!...

B mid - night stream — of cloud - flung blue!...

84 *pp*

S Mus - ic mur - murs be - neath us like a sea, *ppp* *pppp*

A 1 *pp* *in 3* Mus - ic mur - murs be - neath us like a sea, *ppp* *pppp*

A 2,3 *pp* Mus - ic mur - murs be - neath us like a sea, *ppp* *pppp*

T *pp* Mus - ic mur - murs be - neath us like a sea, *ppp* *pppp*

B *pp* Mus - ic mur - murs be - neath us like a sea, *ppp* *pppp*

Mm

89 *pp*

S Come with me! *pp*

A Come with me! *pp*

A Come with me! *pp*

T *p* And faints to a ghost - ly whis - per... Come with me *pp*

B *p* And faints to a ghost - ly whis - per... Come with me *pp*

Take My Hand

93

S *mp*
Come with me! Take my hand, then, Come with me Take my hand, then,

A *mp*
Come with me! Take my hand, then, Come with me Take my hand, then,

T *p*
Come with me! Take my hand,

B *p*
Come with me! Take my hand,

97

S *f*
Come with me! Come with me!

A *f*
Come with me! Come with me!

T *f*
Come with me! Come with me!

B *f*
Come with me! Come with me!