

MUSIC *from* WESTMINSTER

JOE MILLER, EDITOR

BALLADE TO THE MOON

FROM THREE NOCTURNES

WORDS AND MUSIC BY

DANIEL ELDER

FOR SATB VOICES
AND PIANO

A WESTMINSTER CHOIR COLLEGE SERIES



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From the Composer

“Ballade to the Moon” is the first in a cycle of nocturnes for mixed chorus and piano, exploring observational and psychological experiences associated with love, nature, darkness and light. The texts are original and approach these themes in different ways; this piece depicts a moonlit walk through woods and fields, while exploring the love felt for the narrator’s surroundings. The beauty of the text is in its obscurity—the narrator could be referring to nature or to a romantic attraction. The night seems to call, “Come and dream in me!” Under deep forest cover, the narrator entreats the stars, “O share thy light!” until the twinkling stars gleam in the open meadow, luring, “Come and sing with me!” Love for the surrounding dusky beauty causes the narrator to weep with joy, with only the moon as witness.

Each stanza consists of four lines of iambic tetrameter followed by a separate, brief entreaty, then the final three lines (the last being a refrain). This recalls the form of the fourteenth-century ballades of French poet and composer Guillaume de Machaut, hence the title of this piece.

On moonlit night I wander free,
my mind to roam on thoughts of thee.
With midnight darkness beckoning
my heart toward mystic fantasy:

Come and dream in me!

How beautiful, this night in June!
And here, upon the velvet dune,
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

The path lies dark before my sight,
and yet, my feet with pure delight
trod onward through the blackened vale,
beneath the starry sky so bright.

O share thy light!

These woods, their weary wanderer soon
in awe and fearful wonder swoon;
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

And as the darkened hours flee,
my heart beats ever rapidly.
Though heavy hang my eyes with sleep,
my singing soul, it cries to thee:

Come and sing with me!

The twinkling sky casts forth its tune:
O must I leave thy charms so soon?
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

Most sections of this piece may be taken with a sense of rubato—though never overdone. However, during the piano interludes, a more romanticized interpretation is welcome. Slight tempo alterations usually imply changes of 10 to 15 beats per minute. In passages where the divisi is uneven, parts may be re-voiced.

—Daniel Elder

BALLADE TO THE MOON

Daniel Elder (b. 1986)

Adagio misterioso ♩ = 66

p *pp*

Red. * *Red.* *

5 S, A *p*

On moon-lit night I wan - der free.

p T, B

pp *p*

Red. *

9 S *p* *mf*

On moon-lit night I wan - der free, my mind to roam on thoughts of

A *p* *mf*

On moon-lit night I wan - der free, my mind to roam on thoughts of

T *p* *mf*

On moon-lit night I wan - der free, my mind to roam on thoughts of

B *p* *mf*

On moon-lit night I wan - der free, my mind to roam on thoughts of

pp *mp*

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12 *p* *poco allarg.* *mp* *a tempo*

thee. With mid - night dark - ness beck - on - ing — my heart, my heart t'ward

p *poco allarg.* *mp* *a tempo*

thee. With mid - night dark - ness beck - on - ing — my heart, my heart t'ward

p *poco allarg.* *a tempo*

thee.

p *poco allarg.* *a tempo*

thee.

poco allarg. *pp* *a tempo* *mp* 3

Red.

16 *Meno mosso* *pp*

mys - tic fan - ta - sy: — Come — and dream!

mp

mys - tic fan - ta - sy: — Come — and dream, — come — and

pp

Come — and dream!

pp

Come — and dream!

Meno mosso

pp *p*

Red. *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

20

Tempo I

mf

How beau - ti - ful, this

pp

dream in me!

mf

How beau - ti - ful, this

mf

How beau - ti - ful, this

mf

How beau - ti - ful, this

Tempo I

ppp

p

mf

Red. Red. Red. Red.

24

f

mp

night in June! And here, up - on the vel - vet dune, I

f

mp

night in June! And here, up - on the vel - vet dune, I

f

June! And here, up - on the dune,

div.

f

June! And here, up - on the dune,

f

dim.

Red. Red. Red. 3

27 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

weep with joy be-neath the moon.

poco rit. *a tempo*

weep with joy be-neath the moon.

poco rit. *a tempo*

poco rit. *a tempo*

poco rit. *a tempo*

p *a tempo* *mp*

* *Red.* *Red.*

31 *p*

and yet, my

p

and yet, my

p *mp*

The path lies dark be-fore my sight, and yet, my feet with

unis. p *mp*

The path lies dark be-fore my sight, and yet, my feet with

p *mp*

Red. *Red.* *Red.*

35

mp

feet trod on - ward through the black - ened vale,

mp

feet trod on - ward through the black - ened vale,

pure de - light

pure de - light

p

cresc.

Red.

38

p

be - neath the sky. *pp* O

p

be - neath the sky. *pp* O

mp

be - neath the star - ry sky so bright. *pp*

mp

be - neath the star - ry sky so bright. O

sfz

p

Red.

42 **Meno mosso**

share thy light!

O share, thy

Meno mosso

Red. Red. Red. Red. *

46 **Più mosso, poco rubato**

These woods, their weary wand'ring

These woods, their weary wand'ring

light! These woods, their weary wand'ring

div. *mp* These woods, their weary wand'ring

Più mosso, poco rubato

50 *p*

soon in awe and fear - ful won - der

p

soon in awe and fear - ful won - der

p

soon in awe and fear - ful won - der

p *unis.*

soon in awe and fear - ful won - der

54 *pp* *p* **Tempo I**

swoon; I weep with joy be - neath the moon.

pp *p*

swoon; I weep with joy be - neath the moon.

pp *p*

swoon; I weep with joy be - neath the moon.

pp *div.* *p*

swoon; I weep with joy be - neath the moon.

Tempo I

58

mp And as the dark-ened

mp And as the dark-ened

mp And as the dark-ened

unis. mp And as the dark-ened

mp *p*

And. *

62

mp *p poco allarg.*

hours— flee, my heart beats ev - er rap - id - ly. Though

mp *p poco allarg.*

hours flee, my heart beats ev - er rap - id - ly. Though

div. mp *poco allarg. unis. p*

hours— flee, my heart. Though

div. mp *poco allarg. unis. p*

hours— flee, my heart. Though

poco allarg.

65 *poco accel.*

heav - y hang my eyes with sleep,

poco accel. mf

heav - y hang my eyes with sleep, my

poco accel. mf

heav - y hang my eyes with sleep, my soul, _____

poco accel. mf

my soul, _____

div. mf

heav - y hang my eyes with sleep, my soul, _____

poco accel. sfz mp

p *sfz* *mf*

Red. *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *** *Red.*

68 *mf* *div.* *a tempo ff* *unis. f*

my soul, my sing - ing soul, _____ my sing - ing

a tempo ff

soul, my sing - ing soul, _____

a tempo ff *sfz* *f*

my sing - ing soul, _____ it cries to thee, it

a tempo ff *f*

my sing - ing soul, _____ it

a tempo ff *3* *Red.* *Red.*

74

78

sing, come and sing with

p

Red.

81

p me! *pp* O must I leave thy charms so

pp The twin-king sky casts forth its tune:

pp The twin-king sky casts forth its tune:

pp

Molto meno mosso

84

p soon? I weep with joy be - neath the *p*

p soon? I weep with joy be - neath the *p*

p I weep with joy be - neath the *p*

p I weep with joy be - neath the *p*

Molto meno mosso

87

Tempo I *rall.*

moon. *rall.*

moon. *rall.*

moon. *rall.*

moon. *rall.*

Tempo I *p* *pp* *rall.*

Red. *Red.* *

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