

Take This Thread

Le fil que je suis

SATB with piano and violin

Duration ca. 6'20"

MUSIC BY

Katerina Gimon

WORDS BY

Lauren Peat



ATERINA GIMON
composer

Full Score

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

For SATB with piano and violin

Take This Thread

*For the choristers of the
"Sing Across Canada" project*

Take this thread, you sang to me, and I resisted;
my voice caught on all that's ragged in our time.

But though the year seems lost, your thread stays
with me: sewn deep into my days, into my mind.

Emporte cette chanson, ta douce voix m'a bercé,
et son sillage toujours nous liera; *

entre nous et autrui, voici un simple fil
pour silloner la distance vaste et assombrie. **

And if one day this thread should fray and break,
there's something every fearful heart should know.

It's not the rift but how we listened, it's not the hurt
but how we held: this we all will carry if it goes.

[c'est la chanson qui nous liera;
à travers la distance vaste et assombrie.] ***

It's not the rift but how we listened, it's not the hurt
but how we held: this we all will carry when it goes.

Note: the bracketed text is a brief addition by the
composer and interweaves with the French refrain.

* *Take this song, your sweet voice soothed me,
and its wake will bind us together;*

** *between ourselves and others, this simple thread
will travel the vast and darkened distance.*

*** *This song will bind us together;
across the vast and darkened distance.*

— Lauren Peat

Le fil que je suis

*Pour les choristes du projet
« Chantons ensemble, Canada »*

Emporte ce fil, tu as chanté pour moi, et j'ai résisté ;
ma voix prise dans la rudesse de notre temps.

Bien que l'année semble perdue, ton fil me suit :
cousu profondément dans mes jours, en mon esprit.

Emporte cette chanson, ta douce voix m'a bercé,
et son sillage toujours nous liera ;

entre nous et autrui, voici un simple fil
pour silloner la distance vaste et assombrie.

Et si un jour ce fil s'abîme et se défait,
voici ce que tout cœur craintif devrait savoir.

S'il se perd, ce n'est pas la faille, ni la douleur,
mais notre écoute que nous porterons.

[c'est la chanson qui nous liera ;
à travers la distance vaste et assombrie.]

Quand il se perd, ce n'est pas la faille, ni la douleur,
mais notre écoute que nous porterons.

Remarque : le texte entre crochets est un bref ajout de la
compositrice, et s'entrecroise au refrain français.

Full Score

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Program note

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis is a poignant work that explores the connections or “threads” that hold us together and enable us to support one another, even and especially in times of difficulty. Set to the poetry of Lauren Peat, this bilingual choral work was written during and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but it’s powerful message — that the strength to carry on lies in our ability to be present with and for each other — extends far beyond any one moment in history.

The text and music for *Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis* were commissioned as part of the “Sing Across Canada” project, a pan-Canadian choral collaboration in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Involving the five choirs noted at the top of this page, the work's virtual premiere took place on June 19, 2021.

Note de programme :

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis est une œuvre poignante qui explore les liens ou les « fils » qui nous unissent et nous permettent de nous soutenir les uns les autres, même et surtout lors des moments les plus difficiles. Sur un poème de Lauren Peat, cette œuvre chorale bilingue a été écrite pendant et en écho à la pandémie de COVID-19, mais son message puissant — que la force de continuer réside dans notre capacité à être présents les uns avec les autres — s'étend bien au-delà de n'importe quel moment de l'histoire.

Le texte et la musique de *Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis* ont été commandés dans le cadre du projet « Sing Across Canada », une collaboration chorale pancanadienne en réponse à la pandémie de COVID-19. Impliquant les cinq chœurs notés en haut de cette page, la première virtuelle de l'œuvre a eu lieu le 19 juin 2021.

Note from the composer:

I began writing *Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis* in late 2020, amidst the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns in Canada. Perhaps because of this timing, when I first read Lauren's poem two moments stuck out to me in particular, which became central to my musical setting. The first was the image of a “thread” that is strengthened when held together. This, I decided, could be represented by an expressive solo violin line — beginning at first as an independent “voice” then interweaving and becoming one with the choir. The second moment was the line of text “it's not the rift, but how we listened,” which repeats twice in the final lines of the poem. For me, this evoked the image of someone calling out into a barren space and waiting for a response — perhaps a depiction of the vulnerability that is required when we open ourselves up in order to overcome difficulty and begin healing. I decided to shape the structure of the work around this idea — the first half of the piece depicts the “call” out into the open, the violin solo (at rehearsal letter G) the vulnerable moments of waiting for a response, and the final stanza the long-awaited response and the first glimmers of healing.

Note de la compositrice :

J'ai commencé à écrire "Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis" à la fin de 2020, au milieu de la deuxième vague de la pandémie de COVID-19 au Canada. Peut-être en raison de ce timing, lorsque j'ai lu pour la première fois le poème de Lauren, deux moments m'ont particulièrement marqué, et sont devenus centraux dans mon cadre musical. Le premier était l'image d'un « fil » qui se fortifie lorsqu'il est maintenu ensemble. Cette image, j'ai décidé, pourrait être représentée par une ligne expressive de violon solo — commençant d'abord comme une « voix » indépendante, puis s'entrelaçant et faisant corps avec le chœur. Le deuxième moment était la ligne "ce n'est pas la faille...mais notre écoute que nous porterons", qui se répète deux fois dans les dernières lignes du poème. Pour moi, cette ligne évoquait l'image de quelqu'un qui s'écrive dans un espace aride, et qui attend une réponse — peut-être une représentation de la vulnérabilité qui est requise lorsque nous nous en ouvrons afin de surmonter les difficultés et commencer à guérir. J'ai décidé de façonner la structure de l'œuvre autour de cette idée : la première moitié de la pièce dépeint le cri à l'air libre, le solo de violon (à la lettre de répétition G) les moments vulnérables d'attente d'une réponse, et la finale strophe la réponse tant attendue et les premières lueurs de guérison.

Full Score **Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis**

For SATB with piano and violin

Note from the poet:

When I was approached to write a poem for the Sing Across Canada Project, the coronavirus pandemic had transformed the landscape of choral music as we knew it. Many arts organizations were—and tragically, still are—hanging by a thread, the vital lifeblood of concerts and audiences suspended indefinitely.

The Sing Across Canada Project, as its name suggests, was an attempt to offer a different kind of lifeblood: a piece of choral music that would virtually crisscross the country, through the almighty power of video conferencing. And so I began to think more about that hanging thread; about what it might mean to nurture it, to embolden and praise it—to find improbable ways of strengthening the bonds between us, even and especially in the darkest of times.

Note du poète:

Lorsque j'ai été approchée pour écrire un poème pour le projet Chantons ensemble, Canada, la pandémie de coronavirus avait transformé le paysage de la musique chorale tel que nous le connaissons. De nombreuses organisations artistiques ne tenaient—et tragiquement, ne tiennent toujours—qu'à un fil, l'élément vital des concerts et des spectateurs suspendu indéfiniment.

Le projet Sing Across Canada, comme son nom l'indique, était une tentative d'offrir un autre type de vitalité: une pièce de musique chorale qui sillonnait virtuellement le pays, grâce à la force toute-puissante de la vidéoconférence. Et donc j'ai commencé à penser davantage à ce fil; sur ce que cela pourrait signifier de le nourrir, de l'enhardir et de le louer—pour trouver des moyens improbables de fortifier les liens entre nous, même et surtout lors des moments les plus sombres.

About the Creators

Katerina Gimon's uniquely dynamic, poignant, and eclectic compositional style is rapidly earning her a reputation as a distinctive voice in contemporary Canadian choral composition and beyond. Her music has been described as "sheer radiance" (Campbell River Mirror), "imbued...with human emotion" (San Diego Story), and capable of taking listeners on a "fascinating journey of textural discovery" (Ludwig Van). Her works draw inspiration from a myriad of places — from the Ukrainian folk music of her heritage to indie rock, as well as from her roots as a songwriter. Katerina's compositions have been performed widely across Canada, the United States, and internationally. She is currently the composer-in-residence for women's vocal ensemble Myriad and is based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. www.katerinagimon.com

Lauren Peat is a writer, lyricist, and educator. Her poems, translations, and interviews have appeared in Asymptote, The Puritan, AGNI, Volume, and elsewhere; her writing is also featured in the repertoire of acclaimed vocal ensembles across Canada. She has led writing workshops at a number of universities, including Boston University and the University of Toronto, and currently teaches language arts in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. www.laurenpeatwrites.com

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Full Score

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

For SATB with piano and violin

Lauren Peat

Katerina Gimon

Tenderly $\text{♩} = 60$

The musical score consists of eight staves, each with a different instrument or voice part. The first three staves (Violin, SA, TB) are in treble clef, while the next four (Piano, Vln., SA, TB) are in bass clef. The piano part includes a dynamic marking p and a performance instruction "espress.". The violin part has a dynamic marking p and a performance instruction "espress.". The vocal parts (SA, TB) have rests throughout the first section. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second section begins with a dynamic marking p and a performance instruction "Tend. ad. lib". The violin part has grace notes marked with a circled "3". The piano part continues with a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

*All grace notes should be on the beat.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

8 gliss. gliss. Sul G molto rit. a tempo **A**

Vln.

SA molto rit. a tempo **p**
Take this thread you sang to

TB molto rit. a tempo

Pno. molto rit. a tempo

12

Vln. n

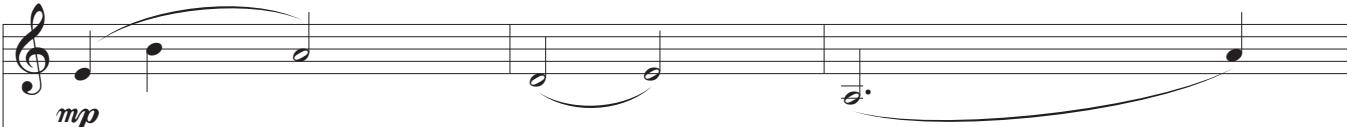
SA me and I re - sis - ted; **mp** my voice caught

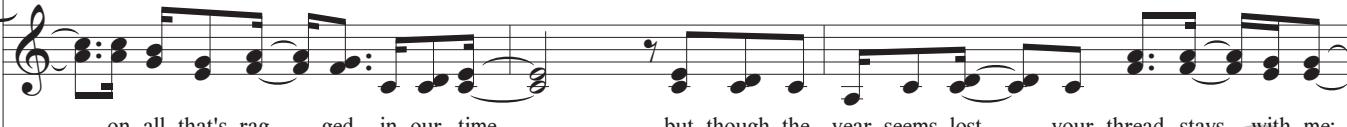
TB **mp** my voice caught

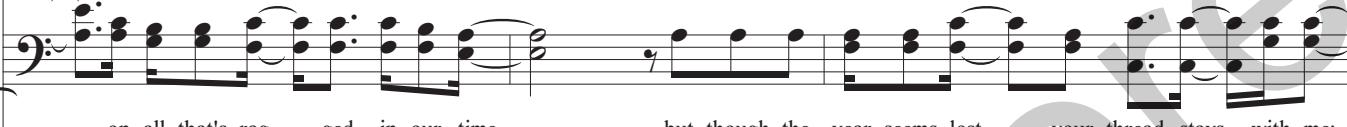
Pno. 8

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

15

Vln. 
mp

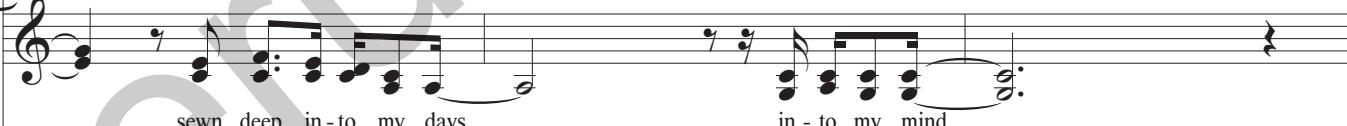
SA 
 — on all that's rag - ged in our time — but though the year seems lost — your thread stays with me:

TB 
 — on all that's rag - ged in our time — but though the year seems lost — your thread stays with me:

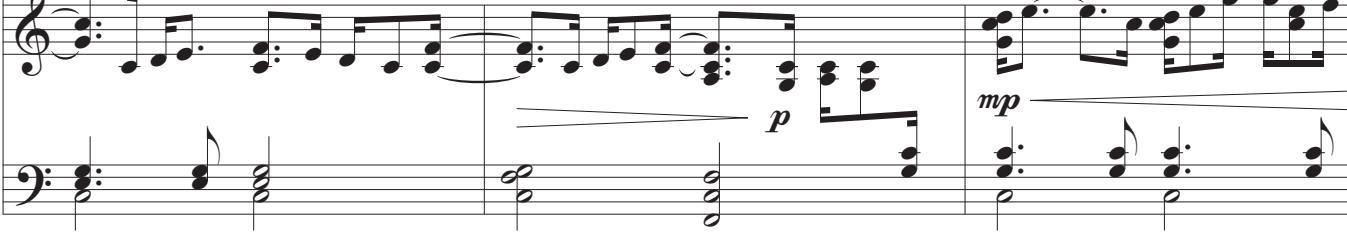
Pno. 
mp

18

Vln. 
p

SA 
 — sewn deep in - to my days, — in - to my mind. —
p

TB 
 — sewn deep in - to my days, — in - to my mind. —
p

Pno. 
p *mp*

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21

Vln. SA TB Pno.

B spiccato

mp

Em - por - te cette chan - son,

mp

Em - por - te cette chan - son

mp

23

Vln. SA TB Pno.

ta dou - ce voix *3* m'a ber - cé, et son sil -

ta dou - ce voix m'a ber - cé, et son sil -

3

8

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26

Vln. SA TB Pno.

la - ge tou - jours nous li - e - ra, nous li - e -

la - ge tou - jours nous li - e - ra, nous li - e -

29

Vln. SA TB Pno.

C 6 *mf* nous et au - trui, —
mf nous et au - trui, —
ra; nous et au - trui, —
ra; en - tre nous et au - trui, —

*All grace notes should be on the beat.

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31

Vln.

SA

voi - ci un sim - ple fil pour sil - lon - ner la dis - tan - ce

TB

voi - ci un sim - ple fil pour sil - lon - ner la dis - tan - ce

Pno.

33

Vln.

cresc.

SA

vast' et as - som - bri - e.

TB

vast' et as - som - bri - e.

Pno.

D

f

espess.

f

f

10

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

36

Vln. SA TB

Pno.

39

Vln. SA TB

Pno.

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff (Violin) has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It starts with eighth-note pairs followed by sustained notes and sixteenth-note patterns. The second staff (Soprano) has a treble clef and is mostly silent. The third staff (Tenor Bass) has a bass clef and is also mostly silent. The bottom staff (Piano) has a treble clef and a bass clef, with two hands playing chords. Measure 36 ends with a common time signature. Measure 37 begins with a 2/4 time signature, indicated by a '2' over a '4'. Measures 38 and 39 continue in 2/4 time. Measure 39 concludes with a common time signature. The piano part features complex sixteenth-note patterns in both hands.

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The score will continue on the following page.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

44

Vln.

S

A

T

B

Pno.

fray and break, there's some - thing ev - 'ry fear - ful heart should

fray and break, there's some - thing ev - 'ry fear - ful heart should

fray and break, there's some - thing ev - 'ry fear - ful heart should

fray and break, there's some - thing ev - 'ry fear - ful heart should

fray and break, there's some - thing ev - 'ry fear - ful heart should

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46

Vln.

Soprano (S) lyrics: know. Ah

Alto (A) lyrics: know. It's not the rift but how we list - ened,

Tenor (T) lyrics: know. Ah

Bass (B) lyrics: know. It's not the rift but how we list - ened,

Piano (Pno.) accompaniment: The piano part consists of two staves. The top staff shows a series of chords in the treble clef, primarily consisting of G major and C major chords. The bottom staff shows bass notes and some harmonic support in the bass clef.

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48

Vln.

S

A

T

B

Pno.

it's not the hurt but how we held: this we all will

ah this we all will

it's not the hurt but how we held: this we all will

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

50

Vln.

S car - ry ____ if it goes. _____ en - tre

A car - ry ____ if it goes. _____ en - tre

T 8 car - ry ____ if it goes. _____ Em - por - te cette chan - son,

B car - ry ____ if it goes. _____ Em - por - te cette chan - son,

Pno.

The score consists of six staves. The top four staves represent vocal parts: Violin (Vln.), Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Tenor (T). The bottom two staves represent harmonic support: Bass (B) and Piano (Pno.). The piano part includes a dynamic marking 'p' (piano) at the beginning of the section. The vocal parts sing a simple melody with sustained notes and slurs. The piano part provides harmonic support with chords and eighth-note patterns. The vocal parts sing lyrics in English and French, with some lyrics appearing on both staves. Measure numbers 50 and 8 are indicated above the staves.

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F

Vln.

Soprano (S) lyrics: nous et au - trui, voi - ci un sim - ple fil pour

Alto (A) lyrics: nous et au - trui, voi - ci un sim - ple fil pour

Tenor (T) lyrics: Em - por - te cette chan - son c'est la chan - son qui nous li - e-

Bass (B) lyrics: Em - por - te cette chan - son c'est la chan - son qui nous li - e-

Piano (Pno.)

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54

Vln.

Sil - lon - ner la dis - tan - ce _____ vas - - -

sil - lon - ner la dis - tan - ce _____ vas - - -

ra qui nous li - e - ra; à tra - vers la dis -

ra qui nous li - e - ra; à tra - vers la dis -

Pno.

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56

Vln.

S

A

T

B

Pno.

te,
la dis - tan - ce
vast'
la dis - tan - ce

te,
la dis - tan - ce
vast'
la dis - tan - ce

tan - - - ce,
la dis - tan - ce

ce,

tan - - - ce,
la dis - tan - ce

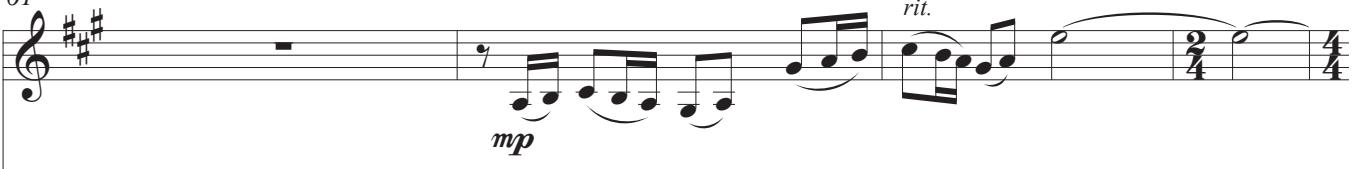
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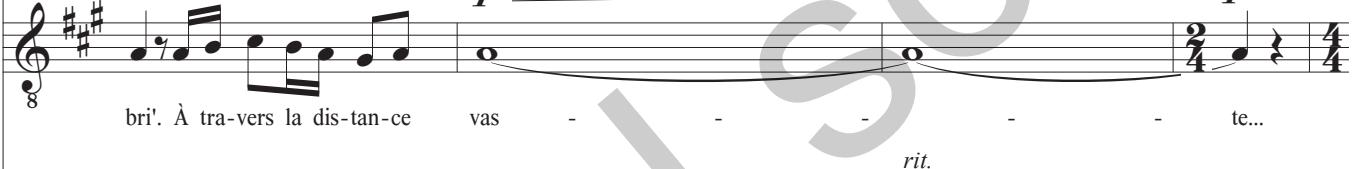
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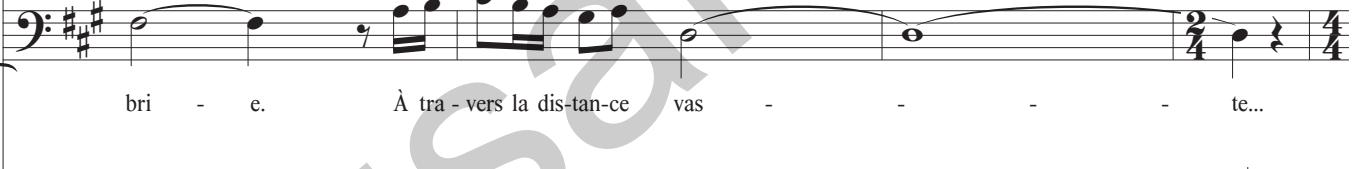
61

Vln. 

S 

A 

T 

B 

Pno. 

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Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

G

*a tempo
very freely, with rubato*

65 Vln. $\begin{array}{c} \text{G} \\ \text{Vln.} \end{array}$ $\begin{array}{c} \text{p} \\ \text{---} \end{array}$

*a tempo
very freely, with rubato*

SA

TB

*a tempo
very freely, with rubato*

Pno.

*a tempo
very freely, with rubato*

follow the violin

69 Vln. $\begin{array}{c} \text{G} \\ \text{Vln.} \end{array}$ $\begin{array}{c} \text{5} \\ \text{6} \\ \text{5} \end{array}$

gliss.

SA

TB

mp

It's not the rift

Pno.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

H

Vln. SA TB Pno.

6 5 2

but how we list - ened, *mp*

it's not the hurt ____ but how we held:

75 2 4 3 rit. 3 2 4 a tempo

cresc. 4 2 4 3 rit. 2 4 mp a tempo

this we all will car-ry, this we all will car-ry, this we all will

cresc. 4 2 4 3 rit. 2 4 mp a tempo

this we all will car-ry, this we all will car-ry, this we all will

cresc. r.h. 3 2 4 3 rit. r.h. 3 2 4 a tempo

Pno.

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79

Vln. rit. a tempo

SA rit. a tempo
car - ry _____ when it goes.

TB rit. a tempo
car - ry _____ when it goes.

Pno. rit. a tempo

83

Vln. molto rit.

SA molto rit.

TB molto rit.

Pno. molto rit.