

Take This Thread

Le fil que je suis

SSA with piano and violin

Duration ca. 6'20"

MUSIC BY

Katerina Gimón

WORDS BY

Lauren Peat



This SSA setting was commissioned by the Bach Children's Chorus (Charissa Bagan, Artistic Director) to honour the memory of choir alum Heather Barnes, a professional singer, musician, and educator who excelled at making music and sharing that gift with others everywhere she lived.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

For SAA 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 sillonner 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.

Le fil que je suis

*Pour les choristes du project
« 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 sillonner la distance vaste et assombrie.

Et si un jour ce fil s'abîme et se défait,
voici ce que tout coeur 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.

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

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

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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 its 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 SSA 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'écrie 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.

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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 connaissions. 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 sillonnerait 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.

Commissioned by the Grand Philharmonic Choir (Mark Vuorinen, Artistic Director) with the Symphony Nova Scotia Chorus & Halifax Camerata Singers (Jeff Joudrey, conductor), la Société chorale de Saint-Lambert (Xavier Brossard-Ménard, conductor), and the Richard Eaton Singers (Leonard Ratzlaff, conductor).

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Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

For SAA with piano and violin

Lauren Peat

Katerina Gimon

Tenderly ♩ = 60

Violin

S

A

Piano

p *espress.*

p

Ped. ad. lib.

Vln.

S

A

Pno.

*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. *n*

S *molto rit.* *a tempo*

A *molto rit.* *a tempo* ***p*** Opt. Solo (or Small Group)
Take this thread you sang to

Pno. *molto rit.* *a tempo*

12

Vln. *n*

S ***mp*** Opt. Duo (or Small Group)
my voice caught

A ***mp*** Opt. Duo (or Small Group)
me and I re - sis - ted; my voice caught

Pno.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

15

Vln. *mp*

S

Alternative note option

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

A

— 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*

S

p *divisi*

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

A

p Alt. line

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

Pno. *p* *mp*

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

B *spiccato*

21

Vln. *mp*

S1 *tutti mp*
Em - por - te cette chan - son,

S2 *tutti mp*
Em - por - te cette chan - son, — Em - por - te cette chan - son

A *mp*
Em - por - te cette chan - son

Pno. *mp*

23

Vln.

S1
ta dou - ce voix m'a ber - cé, et son sil -

S2
ta dou - ce voix m'a ber - cé, et son sil -

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

Pno.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

26

Vln.

S1
la - ge - tou - jours nous li - e - ra, nous li - e -

S2
la - ge - tou - jours nous li - e - ra, nous li - e -

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

Pno.

29

Vln.

S1
ra; en - tre nous_ et au - trui, _

S2
ra; en - tre nous_ et au - trui, _ nous_ et au - trui, _

A
ra; nous_ et au - trui, _

Pno.

C

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

*All grace notes should be on the beat.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

31

Vln.

S1
voi - ci un sim - ple fil pour sil - lon - ner la dis - tan - ce

S2
voi - ci un sim - ple fil pour sil - lon - ner la dis - tan - ce

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

Pno.

33

Vln.
cresc. **D** *f* *espress.*

S1
vast' et as - som - bri - e. *f*

S2
vast' et as - som - bri - e. *f*

A
vast' et as - som - bri - e.

Pno.

This page has been intentionally left blank.

The score will continue on the following page.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

E

42 *pl*

Vln.

S1 *f*
And if one day this thread should

S2 *f*
And if one day this thread should

A *f*
And if one day this thread should

Pno.

44

Vln.

S1
fray and break, there's some - thing ev - 'ry fear - ful heart should

S2
fray and break, there's some - thing ev - 'ry fear - ful heart should

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

Pno.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

46

Vln.

S1

S2

A

Pno.

48

Vln.

S1

S2

A

Pno.

know. _____ Ah _____

know. _____ It's not the rift _____ but how we list - ened,

know. _____ It's not the rift _____ but how we list - ened,

ah _____ this we all will

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

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

13

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

50

Vln.

S1

S2

A

Pno.

F

Vln.

S1

S2

A

Pno.

car - ry ___ if it goes. ___ en - tre

car - ry ___ if it goes. ___ Em - por - te cette chan - son,

car - ry ___ if it goes. ___ en - tre

nous_ et au-trui, ___ voi-ci un sim - ple fil pour

Em - por - te cette chan - son ___ c'est la chan - son qui nous li-e-

nous_ et au-trui, ___ voi-ci un sim - ple fil pour

14

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

54

Vln.

S1

S2

A

Pno.

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

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

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

56

Vln.

S1

S2

A

Pno.

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

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

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

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis". The score is arranged for Violin (Vln.), Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), Alto (A), and Piano (Pno.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into two systems, starting at measure 54 and 56. The lyrics are in French and describe a thread that connects people across distances. The vocal parts feature triplets and long melodic lines. The piano accompaniment consists of a rhythmic pattern in the right hand and chords in the left hand.

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The score will continue on the following page.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

65 **G** *a tempo*
very freely, with rubato

Vln. *p* gliss.

S *a tempo*
very freely, with rubato

A *a tempo*
very freely, with rubato

Pno. *a tempo*
very freely, with rubato
follow the violin

69 gliss.

Vln. 5 6 5

S

A *mp*
It's not the rift

Pno.

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

H

Vln. *mp*

S *mp*
it's not the hurt — but how we held:

A
— but how we list - ened, —

Pno. *mp*

75

Vln. *mf* *rit.* *mp* *a tempo*

S *cresc.* *mf rit.* *mp a tempo*
this we all will car-ry, this we all will car-ry, this we all will

A *cresc.* *mf rit.* *mp a tempo*
this we all will car-ry, this we all will car-ry, this we all will

Pno. *cresc.* *mf* *rit.* *a tempo*
r.h. 3 r.h. 3

Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis

79

Vln.

S

A

Pno.

rit.

a tempo

Alt. line

car-ry — when it goes.

car-ry — when it goes.

rit.

a tempo

rit.

a tempo

83

Vln.

S

A

Pno.

molto rit.

molto rit.

molto rit.

molto rit.

3

3

The image shows a page of a musical score for the piece 'Take This Thread / Le fil que je suis'. It features four staves: Violin (Vln.), Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Piano (Pno.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system starts at measure 79 and ends at measure 82. The second system starts at measure 83 and ends at measure 86. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system includes lyrics for the Soprano and Alto parts: 'car-ry — when it goes.' The Soprano part has an 'Alt. line' (alternative line) starting at measure 80. Performance markings include 'rit.' (ritardando) and 'a tempo'. The second system is marked 'molto rit.' (molto ritardando). The piano part features a triplet of eighth notes in measures 85 and 86. A large watermark 'MusicalScoreStore.com' is overlaid diagonally across the page.