

Sorrow Into Song  
GP-D030  
SATB, piano

Christine Donkin

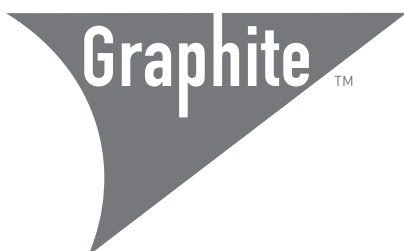
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# Christine Donkin

## Sorrow Into Song

for SATB choir and piano

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### Text:

Like barley bending  
In low fields by the sea,  
Singing in hard wind  
Ceaselessly;

Like barley bending  
And rising again,  
So would I, unbroken,  
Rise from pain;

So would I softly,  
Day long, night long,  
Change my sorrow  
Into song.

- Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

### Program Note:

“Sorrow into Song” was inspired by my mother, who passed away in April 2021. In the last years of her life, she was unable to speak or understand language due to dementia, but she never stopped singing. As communication became more and more difficult, and as she gradually stopped recognizing her friends and family, it became clear that music was the last remaining connection that we had with her.

The way that my mother continued “singing in hard wind ceaselessly” after she lost the ability to speak is reflected in the way that I have set the poem: while the tenor and bass parts contain all of the text, the soprano and alto parts consist almost entirely of wordless singing. The only words sung by the sopranos and altos are “rise from pain” words which I think encapsulate both the essence of the poem and the role of music in my mother’s life, especially when she was ill.

- Christine Donkin (2022)

# Sorrow Into Song

for SATB and piano

Sara Teasdale

Christine Donkin

*♩ = 114*

Piano

*mp*

pedal harmonically

4

T

*mp*

Like bar - ley bend - ing, bend - ing in low fields—

B

*mp*

Like bar - ley bend - ing, bend - ing in low fields—

*mf*

*mp*

7

T *mf*  
 — by the sea, bend-ing in low fields — by the sea, sing-ing in hard wind

B *mf*  
 — by the sea, bend - ing in low fields — by the sea, sing - ing in hard wind

*Mysterious; delicate*

11

S *p*  
 la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

A *p*  
 la la la la la la la la la la

T *p*  
 — cease - less - ly.

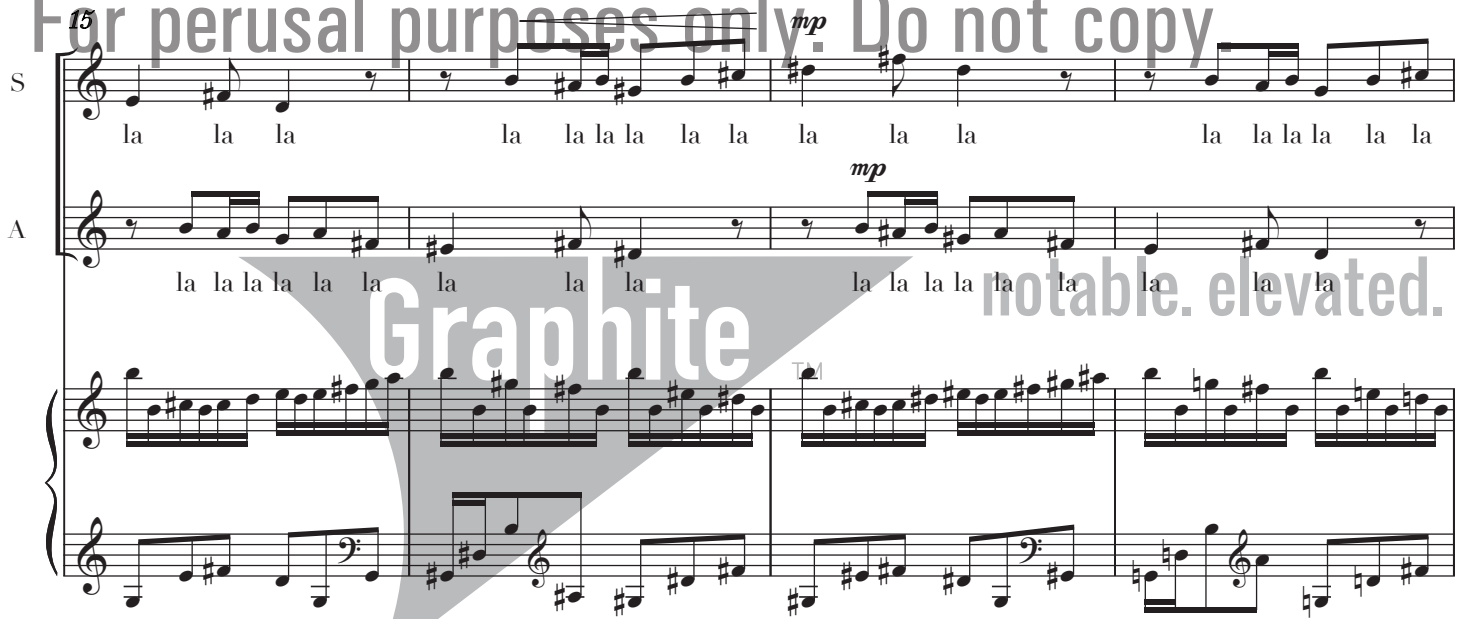
B *p*  
 — cease - less - ly.

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15 *mp*

S la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

A *mp*  
la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la



19 *p*

S la la la la la

A *p*  
la la la la la la



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*mp*

S ah ah ah ah ah

*mp*

A ah ah ah ah ah

*mp*

T Like bar-ley bend-ing and ris - ing, bend-ing and ris-ing a-gain,

*mp*

B Like bar-ley bend-ing, bend-ing and ris - ing, ris-ing a-gain,

*mf* *mp*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 23 through 26. It features five staves: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano. The Soprano and Alto parts have vocal lines with lyrics 'ah' repeated five times. The Tenor and Bass parts have vocal lines with lyrics 'Like bar-ley bend-ing and ris - ing, bend-ing and ris-ing a-gain,'. The Piano part provides accompaniment with dynamic markings of *mf* and *mp*. A large watermark 'Graphite notable, elevated.' is overlaid on the score.

27

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S ah ah ah ah

A ah ah ah

T bend - ing and ris - ing, ris - ing a - gain, So would I

B bend - ing and ris - ing, ris - ing a - gain, So, so would

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 27 through 30. It features five staves: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano. The Soprano and Alto parts have vocal lines with lyrics 'ah' repeated four times. The Tenor and Bass parts have vocal lines with lyrics 'bend - ing and ris - ing, ris - ing a - gain, So would I' and 'bend - ing and ris - ing, ris - ing a - gain, So, so would'. The Piano part provides accompaniment. A large watermark 'Graphite notable, elevated.' is overlaid on the score.

30 *f*

S ah Rise from

A ah ah rise from pain, *f*

T So would I, un-bro-ken, <sup>TM</sup> rise from pain, *f*

B I, so would I, un-bro-ken, rise from pain, *f*

34

S pain, rise from pain. Rise

A rise from pain, rise from pain,

T rise from pain, rise from pain,

B rise from pain, <sup>TM</sup> rise from pain, *f*

38

S from pain, rise from pain. ah

A Rise from pain, rise from pain. ah

T rise from pain, rise from pain.

B rise from pain, rise from pain.

42

S ah ah ah

A ah ah ah

T ah So would I soft-ly, so would I soft-ly, Day long,

B ah So would I soft-ly, so would I soft-ly, Day, day

46

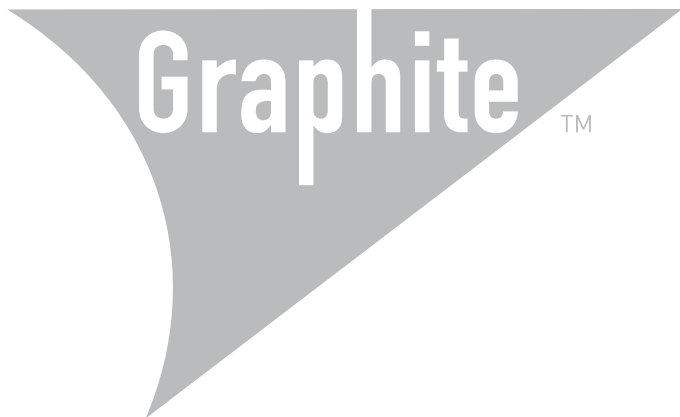
S *p* ah \_\_\_\_\_ la la la la la la

A *p* ah \_\_\_\_\_ ah \_\_\_\_\_ la la la la la la la la

T *p* night \_\_\_\_\_ long, change my sor-row \_\_\_\_\_ in - to song.

B *p* long, night \_\_\_\_\_ long, change my sor-row in - to song.

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51

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S  
la la la la la la la la la la la la

A  
la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

T  
8

B

Graphite TM

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55

*rit.*

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S  
la la la la la la la la la la la la *ppp*

A  
la la la la la la la la la la la la *ppp*

T  
8

B

Graphite TM

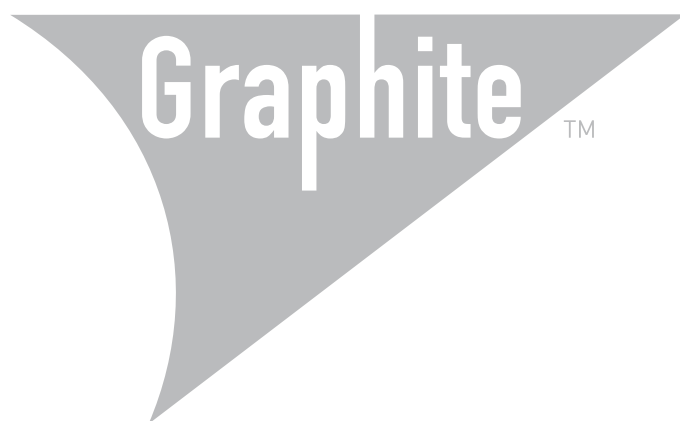
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*rit.*

*decresc. poco a poco*

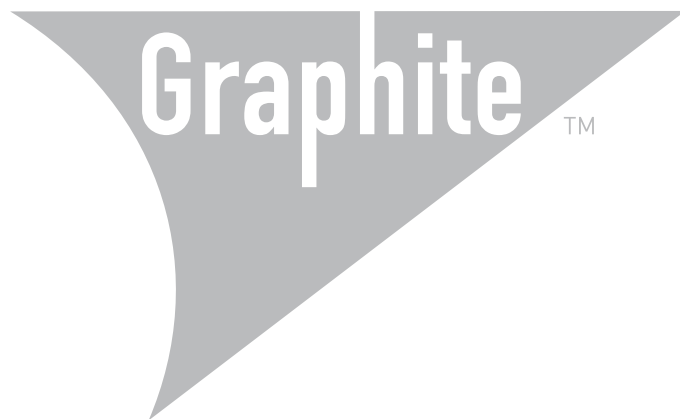
*ppp*

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# Christine Donkin

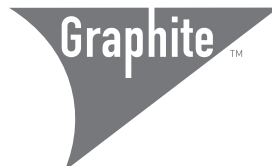
Christine Donkin is a Canadian composer of choral and instrumental music which has been performed and recorded by (among others) the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Symphony New Brunswick, DaCapo Chamber Choir, Elektra Women's Choir, Cantus (the Norwegian choir that can be heard at the start of the Disney film Frozen), and the Canadian Guitar Quartet.

She is also a music educator who prioritizes the creation of music for students of all levels. Her pedagogical compositions and arrangements for piano, violin, and other instruments are featured in the publications of several music exam organizations, including the largest in Canada (the Royal Conservatory of Music) as well as two of the largest in the world (the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and Trinity College London); and as such are used by music students and teachers around the world.

Christine's interest in words has resulted in some unusual sources of text for her choral compositions, including an ornithologist's field notes, a list of words in thirty-five different languages, vowel and consonant sounds instead of words, and several compositions in which the lyrics were created by the choir that commissioned the work. She has also initiated several creative collaborations, commissioning both poets and fellow composers.

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