

DT0108 | TRUMBORE
HEART BUTTE, MONTANA | SATB CHORUS & TREBLE SOLOIST

HEART BUTTE, MONTANA

SATB chorus & treble soloist

text by M.L. Smoker

daletrumbore
c o m p o s e r

HEART BUTTE, MONTANA

The unsympathetic wind, how she has evaded me for years now,
leaving a guileless shell and no way to navigate. Once when I stood
on a plateau of earth just at the moment before the dangerous,
jutting peaks converged upon the lilting sway of grasslands, I almost
found a way back. There, the sky, quite possibly all the elements,
caused the rock and soil and vegetation to congregate. Their prayer
was not new and so faint I could hardly discern. Simple remembrances,
like a tiny, syncopated chorus calling everyone home: across
a thousand eastward miles, and what little wind was left at my back.
But I could not move. And then the music was gone.
All that was left were the spring time faces of mountains, gazing down,
their last patches of snow, luminous. I dreamed of becoming snow melt,
gliding down the slope and in to the valley. With the promise,
an assurance, that there is always a way to become bird, tree, water again.

M.L. Smoker. "Heart Butte, Montana" from *New Poets of Native Nations*.
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PROGRAM NOTE

Dale Trumbore met poet M.L. Smoker in April 2022, when they were both Artists in Residence at the Ucross Foundation in Clearmont, Wyoming. Smoker's poem embodies a landscape that initially appears unforgiving, but ultimately offers a chance to find a way home "to become bird, tree, water again." The town of Heart Butte is located on the southern border of Montana's Blackfeet Indian Reservation.

This piece was commissioned by Choral Arts Initiative (Brandon Elliott, Artistic Director). This work is dedicated to CAI, with gratitude to singer Genie Hossain.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Greyed-out rests in an aleatoric measure indicate duration only; aleatoric notes or breaths should continue through them.

Notes in parentheses indicate optional, but slightly less preferable, options for the solo line. When singers change from one vowel sound (e.g. "oo," "oh") or consonant sound ("nn") to another, the transition should be subtle, not abrupt.

Whenever a glissando is marked between two notes, singers should use the entire marked duration of the slide to reach the next note.

Commissioned by Choral Arts Initiative
Brandon Elliott, Artistic Director

Heart Butte, Montana

for SATB chorus & treble soloist

Text by M.L. Smoker

Music by Dale Trumbore

Tenderly; ♩ = ca. 60

SOPRANO
ALTO
TENOR
BASS
Piano

Tenderly; ♩ = ca. 60

*Singers may choose between "nn" or "oo" or alternate between the two as they oscillate slowly between the pitches, occasionally sliding between them, alternating approximately between the speed of half notes and eighth notes. Singers should rest briefly whenever a breath is needed.

**Throughout the piece, an "x" notehead indicates an exhale, largely unvoiced but whistling slightly, on "oo" (with lips pursed, imitating the wind). In aleatoric measures, this exhale may last for anywhere between approximately 2-5 beats.

Heart Butte, Montana

2

Solo

mp The un - sym-pa-thet-ic wind, *mf* how she has e-vad-ed me for

S. *pp* until m. 10

A. *pp* until m. 10

T. *pp* — *mf* — *p*
oh

B. *mf*
oh

Pno.

Solo

years now, *mp* *mf* leav - ing a guile - less

S. *mp* *mf*
oh oo oh

A. *p* *mf*
nm/oo

T. *mf*
oh

B. *p* *mf*
oh

Pno.

poco rit.

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Heart Butte, Montana

4

18 *mf* *mp* *p*

Solo Once when I stood on a pla - teau of earth just at the

S. *f* *mp* *p*
oo

A. *f* *mp* *pp*
oo oh

T. *f* *mp* *pp*
oo oh

B. *f* *mp* *pp*
oo oh

Pno. 18 *f* *mp* *pp*

23 *f* *poco rit.*

Solo mo - ment be - fore the dan - ger - ous jut - ting peaks con - verged up - on the

S. *mp* *f*
oh

A. *mp* *f*
oh

T. *mp* *f*
oh

B. *mp* *f*
oh

Pno. 23 *mp* *f* *poco rit.*

Heart Butte, Montana

27 *mp* **Freely** *p* *mf* $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

Solo
lilt - ing sway of grass-lands, I al - most found a way back,

S.
oo ah

A.
oo ah oh

T.
oo ah

B.
oo ah

Pno.

31 *mf* *mf* *mp*

Solo
There, the sky quite pos-sib-ly all the el-e-ments, caused the

S. **Soprano Solo** *mf* *mf*
oh ah

A. **Sopranos & Altos** *mf* *mp*
ah oh

T. *mf* *mf* *mp*
oh ah oh

B. *mf* *mf* *mp*
oh ah oh

Pno.

Heart Butte, Montana

♩ = ca. 80

35

Solo

rock and soil and veg - e - ta - tion to con - gre - gate. Their prayer was not

(Solo) *mf* *mp* Sopranos, tutti

S. ah oh

A. *mp* *pp* *mf* oh nn/oo or oo

T. *mp* oh oo

B. *mp* oh oo

Pno.

♩ = ca. 80

40

Solo

new and so faint I could hard - ly dis - cern.

S. *pp* *p* *p* oo ah oo

A.

T. *pp* *mp* ah oo

B. *pp* *mp* *p* ah oo

Pno.

Heart Butte, Montana

46 rit. In time (♩ = ca. 80)

Solo *mp* *p*

S. *p*

A. *p*

T. *p* *mp* *pp*

B. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *pp*

oo oh oo oo

Sim-ple re-mem-bran-ces, like a ti-ny syn-co-pa-ted

oh

oo oh oo oo

46 rit. In time (♩ = ca. 80)

Pno.

52 *mf* poco rit. Freely *mf* In time *mp*

Solo *mf* *p*

S. *mf* *p*

A. *p* *mf* *p*

T. *mp* *p* *mf* *p*

B. *mp* *p* *mf* *p*

cho-rus call-ing eve-ry one home: a-cross a thou-sand east-ward

oh → oo

oh → oo

oh → oo

oh → oo

oh → oo

52 poco rit. Freely In time

Pno.

Heart Butte, Montana

8

57 *poco rit.* *Freely* *mp*

Solo miles, and what

S. *pp* *p* *mf* *p*
oo oh oo

A. *pp* *p* *mf* *p*
oo oh oo

T. *p* *mf* *p*
oo oh oo

B. *p* *mf* *p*
oo oh oo

Pno. *poco rit.* *Freely*

62 *In time*

Solo lit - tle wind was left at my back.

S. *p* *mf*
oo oo

A. *pp* *<mf>*
nn/oo oo

T. *p* *mp*
oo oo

B. *p*
oo

Pno. *In time*

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Heart Butte, Montana

10

81 *mp* *mf*

Solo

All that was left were the spring time fa - ces of moun-tains gaz-ing down,

p *pp* *Solo* *p* *mf* *p*

S. ah oh ah ah

A. *pp* *mf*
nn/oo oh

T. *p* *mp* *mf* *p*
oo oh ah

B. *p* *mp* *mf* *p*
oh oh ah

Pno.

87 *mp* *mf*

Solo

the last patch-es of snow, lu - mi-nous.

pp *Solo* *mp*

S. oh oh oo

A. *pp* *mf*
ah oh oo

T. *mf* *pp* *mf*
nn/oo oo

B. *mf* *pp* *mf*
oh oo

Pno.

92 *mf* *poco rit.*

Solo I dreamed of be-com-ing snow melt, gli-ding down the slope and in to the val-ley.

S. *Tutti pp* *p*
oh ah oo

A. *pp* *p*
nn/oo oh ah oo

T. *mf* *p*
ah oo nn/oo

B. *p* *mf*
ah oo

Pno. *poco rit.*

98 *poco accel.* *In time* *mp* *mf*

Solo With the pro - mise, an as - su - rance, that there is

S. *Sopranos to Alto staff* *Solo mf*
ah

A. *S.A.* *p* *mf*
nn/oo

T. *p*
oh

B. *pp* *p*
oh

Pno. *poco accel.* *In time*

Heart Butte, Montana

12

101

Solo

al - ways a way to be - come bird, tree, wa - ter a -

S.

oo ah nn/oo oo

A.

nn/oo nn/oo oo

T.

ah oo ah

B.

ah oo ah

Pno.

101

105

Solo

gain. oo

S.

nn/oo nn oo

A.

nn

T.

oo nn

B.

oo

Pno.

105



M.L. SMOKER is Nakoda, Dakota and Lakota, an enrolled member of the Fort Peck Tribe. She served as Montana co-poet laureate from 2019-2021 alongside Melissa Kwasny. She received an MFA from the University of Montana in Missoula. In 2019 she was recognized as an alumna of the year by the University and received an honorary doctorate in 2023. Her first collection of poems, *Another Attempt at Rescue*, was published by Hanging Loose Press in 2005. She also co authored a children's graphic novel entitled *Thunderous*, published in 2022. She received a regional Emmy award for her work as a writer/consultant on the PBS documentary *Indian Relay*.

She served as the Director of Indian Education for the state of Montana for almost ten years, was appointed to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education by President Barack Obama and currently works at Education Northwest providing support for Native education efforts around the country.



DALE TRUMBORE is a Los Angeles-based composer and writer whose music has been called "devastatingly beautiful" (*The Washington Post*) and praised for its "soaring melodies and beguiling harmonies deployed with finesse" (*The New York Times*). Trumbore's compositions have been performed widely in the U.S. and internationally by the Chicago Symphony's MusicNOW ensemble, *Conspirare* and the Miró Quartet, soprano Liv Redpath, Los Angeles Children's Chorus, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Modesto Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, Phoenix Chorale, Tonality, and VocalEssence.

The recipient of ACDA's inaugural Raymond W. Brock Competition for Professional Composers, an ASCAP Morton Gould Award, and a Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Grant, Trumbore has also served as Composer in Residence for Choral Chameleon. She has written extensively about working through creative blocks and establishing a career in music in essays and in her first book, *Staying Composed*. Learn more about Trumbore's music and writing at daletrumbore.com.