

SAUNDER
CHOI

OUR STREETS,
A SYMPHONY AGAIN

for SSA choir and piano

SAUNDER CHOI *music*



PROGRAM NOTES:

Our Streets, a Symphony Again is a setting of the playful poem *Too early to celebrate?* by current West Hollywood poet laureate Brian Sonia-Wallace. The piece was commissioned by VOX Femina Los Angeles for their March 2023 concert – *Made in LA: Identity and Belonging in the City of Angels* – a concert that celebrates the city’s diversity.

The poem was commissioned by the city of West Hollywood as it began to reopen from COVID restrictions. It was written as a collaborative work that includes words and memories of its diverse residents answering the questions: What does “reopening” mean? What’s the same/different? How does history fit at that particular time and space?

The text’s ability to capture the city’s history of harboring the LGBTQ+ community spoke to me as a gay immigrant who has found home in Los Angeles – a place where I am fully able to celebrate my different intersectionalities. Moreover, as someone who was holed up in LA for the entirety of the lockdown, the poem perfectly encapsulates the post-pandemic anticipation, excitement, and uncertainty that we all experienced.

TEXT:

Too early to celebrate?

A collaborative poem using words and memories contributed by West Hollywood residents

The sunset strip
echoes, jacarandas bloom bright
after barren months.
Our streets symphony again
wild beyond gardens,
blaze honey
disco
french horns
& orange sherbet glow.

You, dear, never stopped
being a proud march, a palm
frond in ragged wind –
yes, you curled up
in last winter’s hush.
This city threads us
lonely
a plastic oasis of skin
sweaty with starlight.

But now it’s time for
gogo boots & guitar strings,
rooftop pools & history
between your lips
like a cold margarita
while the hot asphalt
dances.
Each of us a song:
equal parts party and protest.

Won’t you walk with me?
My glam aunts, my ferocious uncles,
my frankest friends – my chosen family,
look at all we have lost.
All that survives.
We are a house
built
on bones. We are dancing.
Dancing on bones.

-Brian Sonia-Wallace

commissioned by VOX Femina Los Angeles
Dr. Iris S. Levine, founding artistic director

Our Streets, a Symphony Again

for SSA choir and piano

poetry by Brian Sonia-Wallace
used by permission

Saunder CHOI

Brightly ♩ = 60

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system includes staves for Soprano, Alto, and Piano. The Soprano and Alto parts are currently silent, indicated by horizontal lines. The Piano part begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and features a complex texture of chords and moving lines. The second system includes staves for Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), and Piano (Pno.). The Soprano and Alto parts remain silent. The Piano part continues with similar complex textures. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'PERUSAL SCORE' is overlaid across the entire score.

7 *poco f marc.* *legato*

S. The sun - set strip *v* e - choes, _____ ja - ca -

A. The sun - set strip _____ e - choes, _____ ja - ca -

Pno. *mf*

11 *f*

S. ran - das bloom bright af - ter bar - ren months. _____ Our streets, _____ a

A. ran - das bloom bright af - ter bar - ren months. _____ Our streets, _____ a

Pno. *f*

15 *mp* *poco rit.*

S. sym - pho - ny _____ a - gain. _____ Our streets, a sym - pho - ny _____ a -

A. sym - pho - ny _____ a - gain. _____ Our streets, a sym - pho - ny _____ a -

Pno. *mp*

A a tempo

19

S. gain

A. gain

Pno. *mf*

22

S. *mp*
wild be-yond gar-dens, blaze, blaze ho-ney,

A. *mp*
wild be-yond gar-dens, blaze, blaze ho-ney,

Pno. *sub. mp*

27

S. *poco f*
dis - co dis - co french horns and o - range sher - bet

A. *poco f*
dis - co dis - co french horns and o - range sher - bet

Pno. *poco f* *mp*

31

S. glow.

A. glow.

Pno.

35

S. *p* Dis - co *mf* glow.

A. *p* Dis - co *mf* glow.

Pno.

39

S. *mp tenderly* [B] Won't you walk with me? Won't you walk with me?

A. *mp tenderly* Won't you walk with me? Won't you walk with me?

Pno.

43

S. My glam aunts, my fe - ro - cious un - cles,

A. My glam aunts, my fe - ro - cious un - cles,

Pno.

47

S. my frank - est friends- my cho - sen

A. my frank - est friends- my cho - sen

Pno.

51

mf fa - mi - ly, *p* look at all we have lost. All that sur -

mf fa - mi - ly, *p* look at all we have lost. All that sur -

Pno.

poco rit. *meno mosso* ♩ = 54

55 *poco più* **p** **poco rit.**

S. vives. We're a house built on bones. And we're

A. vives. We're a house built on bones. And we're

Pno. *poco più* **p**

60 **Tempo I** ♩ = 60

S. dan - - - - - cing, we're dan - - - - -

A. dan - - - - - cing, we're dan - - - - -

Pno.

63 *poco f*

S. - cing, we're dan - - - - - cing on bones.

A. - cing, we're dan - - - - - cing on bones.

Pno. *poco f*

67 rit. *mf* *p* a tempo

S. Bones. Bones.

A. Bones. Bones.

Pno. *mf* *p*

72

S.

A.

Pno.

75

S.

A.

Pno.

78 **C** *mf*

S. You, dear, _____ ne - ver stopped be - ing a proud march, a

A. You, dear, _____ ne - ver stopped be - ing a proud march, a

Pno. *mf*

81

S. palm frond in the rag-ged wind- yes, you, you curled up in last win - ter's

A. palm frond in the rag-ged wind- yes, you, you curled up in last win - ter's

Pno.

84 *sub. p*

S. hush. Hush. This ci - ty threads us lone - ly _____

A. *sub. p* hush. Hush. This ci - ty threads us lone - ly, _____

Pno. *sub. p*

87

S. a plas - tic o - a - sis of

A. lone - ly a plas - tic o - a - sis of

Pno.

90

S. skin sweat-y with star - light, star - light,

A. skin sweat-y with star - light, star - light,

Pno.

93

S. star - - light.

A. star - - light.

Pno.

97 *mf* **D**

S. But now it's time for

A. But now it's time for

Pno. *mf*

100

S. go - go boots and gui - tar strings, roof - top pools and

A. go - go boots and gui - tar strings, roof - top pools and

Pno.

104 *mp*

S. his - t'ry be - tween your lips

A. his - t'ry be - tween, be - tween your lips

Pno. *mp*

107

S. like a cold mar - ga - ri - ta while the hot as - phalt

A. like a cold mar - ga - ri - ta while the hot as - phalt

Pno.

110

S. dan - - - ces, dan - - -

A. dan - - - ces, dan - - -

Pno.

poco f

113

S. ces, dan - ces.

A. ces. ces.

Pno.

Slowly and freely ♩. = 54

117 *mp tenderly*

S. Each of us a song: _____ e - qual parts par - ty and pro - test. _

A. _____ Each of us a song: _____ e - qual parts par - ty and pro - test. _

Pno. *mp* *p*

123 **E** non rubato but more subdued

S. _____ The sun - set strip e - choes, _

A. _____ The sun - set strip _

Pno. *mp*

127 *mf*

S. _____ ja - ca - ran - das bloom bright af - ter bar - ren months. _____ Our

A. _____ e - choes, _____ ja - ca - ran - das bloom bright af - ter bar - ren months. _____ Our

Pno. *mf*

131

S. streets, a sym - pho - ny a - gain.

A. streets, a sym - pho - ny a - gain. *p* Won't you

Pno. *mf*

136

S. *p* Won't you walk with me? *Freely* My cho - sen fa - mi - ly. *mp*

A. *p* walk with me? *mp* My cho - sen fa - mi - ly.

Pno. *p* *mp*

141

S. *p* Look at all we have lost. All that sur - vives.

A. *p* Look at all we have lost. All that sur - vives.

Pno. *p*

rall. Tempo I ♩ = 60

145

S. *mf* *poco f*
All that sur - vives.

A. *mf* *poco f*
All that sur - vives.

Pno. *mf* *poco f*

148

S. *ff* non rit

A. *ff*

Pno. *ff* lunga