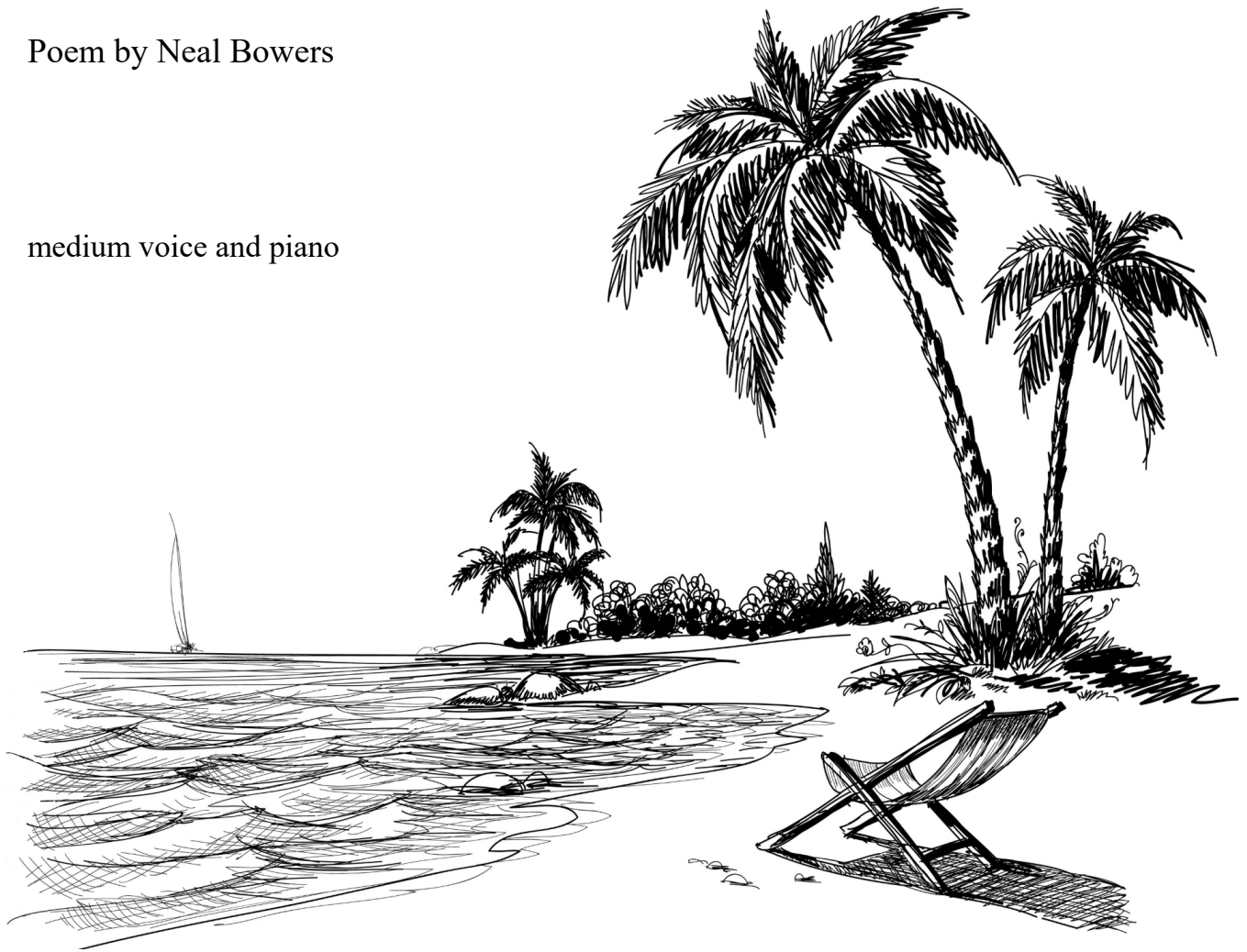


Trouble in a Minnesota Town

Poem by Neal Bowers

medium voice and piano



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

Trouble in a Minnesota Town

The sign in the grocery window says,
NO MANGOES,
and everyone who passes
is seized with a tropical longing:
the sun sets hot orange;
a dense perfume
loiters along the street;
on the tongue is the memory
of something softer than spun honey.

Before daylight, the whole town
is mad for the flavor of mangoes.
A spicy sweetness, almost a cross
between cloves and ginger,
lodges in the brain like a stuck tune.
By noon the record shop
has sold out of calypso albums;
reggae and salsa are going fast.
In the square, someone is showing how
to dance the mambo, the rumba,
pleading for a partner to tango,
por favor, por favor.

When the sign goes up announcing
a sale on papayas, guavas, bananas, avocados,
it is already too late.
The people have begun to paint
their slogan on the walls--
MANGOES O MUERTE--
and the mayor has received
a list of demands:
Mangoes.
Mangoes.
Mangoes.
Mangoes.

Neal Bowers

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for Yehudi Wyner

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Brightly (♩ = 144-152)

mp *sf* *f*

senza pedale

4

p *f*

7

mp *sf*

10

mp *p*

The sign_____ in the gro - cery

14

win - dow - says,

cresc. poco a poco

Senza misura

a tempo

18

passionately f *lightly mp*

NO MAN-GOES, and ev - 'ry-one who pas - ses,

ff *p* *f*

Red.

more intensely

Senza misura

f mp slowly, lingering

21

ev - 'ry one who pas-ses is seized with a tro - pi - cal

sfz *f*

Red.

Tempo di habanera (♩ = 96-104)

24

long - ing: _____

a guitar strumming...

windchimes...

mp

mp

Ped.

Ped.

27

mp

the sun sets hot or - ange; a dense per -

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

30

molto rit.

- fume loi - ters a - long the street: _____

8va

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

Opal Palmer Adisa, poet • Paul Adams, technological hero • Stephen Alexander, lyric consultant • Ginny Allen, Agile coach and friend • The great people at American Composers Forum • Yehuda Amichai, poet • A. R. Ammons, poet • Jennifer Anderson, conductor and composer advocate • Scott Bates, poet • Abbie Betinis, initiator of collaborative endeavors • Beth Norton, conductor and composer advocate • Dennis Blubaugh, more than just a music dealer • Michael deVernon Boblett, poet • Edna Busby, my first piano teacher • Ray Bradbury, writer • Augustin Cadena, translator • Norbert Capek, minister and advocate for religious freedom • Jessica Corbett, editor • David Cummings, poet • Philip Dacey, poet • Catherine Dalton, composer and scrum partner • Emily Dickinson, poet • Evelyn Dudley, poet and caregiver • Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister and composer advocate • Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher and poet • Louise Erdrich, writer • David Allan Evans, poet • Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer • Richard M. Fewkes, minister and writer • Pasha Gertler, poet • Jack Gallagher, composer and teacher • Paul Gerike, proofreader • Jocelyn Hagen and Michael Hagan, founders of Graphite Marketplace • Steve Harper, just about everything • Steve Harkins, web designer • Edie Hill, composer and friend • Langston Hughes, poet • Margaret and George Heald, piano technician • Karel Husa, composer and teacher • David Ignatow, poet • Kabir, mystic • Linda Kachelmeier, composer and scrum partner • Ruth Palmer, conductor and composer advocate • Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet • Paul Rardin, conductor and composer advocate • Kalidasa, poet • Steve Kaul, recording engineer • Søren Kierkegaard, philosopher and poet • Dorothy Knost, piano teacher • Ben Krywosz, artistic director of Nautilus Music-Theater • Denise Levertov, poet • George Ella Lyon, poet • Jonathan Machen, vocalist • Dawna Markova, writer • Anne Matlack, conductor and composer advocate • Nancy Menk, composer advocate • Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet • Jane Ramseyer Miller, conductor, composer, social activist • Joe Mish, conductor and composer advocate • J. David Moore, composer • Gerald Rich, poet • Carl Sandburg, poet • friend • King Sigismund III, religious reformer • Ann Silsbee, composer, poet and friend • Simon Alexander-Adams, sounding board, fellow creative, and awesome son • Steven Stucky, composer and teacher • Rabindranath Tagore, poet • Sister Peronne Marie Thibert, teacher and writer • Oliver Alexander-Adams, unconventional thinker and light of my life • Howard Thurman, civil rights leader and writer • Everyone whose work supports the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries • Charles Varney, high school choral director • Anna Vonhuben, illustrator and graphic designer • Nancy White, poet • John Greenleaf Whittier, poet • Theodore Chickering Williams, poet • Daniel Winter, pianist and teacher • Nancy Wood, poet • Yehudi Wyner, composer and teacher

**A lot of hard work
and creativity went
into bringing this
music to you...**



**...and some of it
was even mine.**

**This page has been intentionally omitted.
(You know why.) A complete perusal score may be
purchased through any music store or dealer.**

Elizabeth Alexander

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The Music of Elizabeth Alexander

www.seafarerpress.com

41 **più mosso** *mp*

Be - fore day - light, _____

marcato

* Ped. * Ped. *

44 **Senza misura** *mf mp*

the whole town is mad for the fla - vor of

* Ped.

46 **Tempo di habanera** **poco accelerando**

man - goes, _____

p

* Ped. Ped.

48 *più mosso*

mf marcato

* Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. * Ped.

51 *p*

A spi - cy sweet-ness, — al-most a cross be - tween cloves and

mf

p

mf

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. * Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

54 *p*

gin - ger, — lod - ges in the brain like a stuck tune. *p*

p

p

Ped. * Ped. Ped. Ped. * Ped.

poco a poco accel.

56 *mf*

By

mf

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

59

noon the re-cord shop has sold out of ca -

left hand over right hand

Ped. *

62 *f*

-lyp - so al - bums;

mp

f 2 1 2 4 5

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molto rall. **Sultry tango tempo** *p*

74

the rum - ba, plead-ing for a part - ner to _____ tan -

pp leggiero

Red. *

77 *mp*

- - go, por fa - vor, por fa -

poco a poco accel. *f*

81

vor. _____ When the

84

sign goes up an - nounc - ing a sale

87

on pa - pa - yas, gua - vas, ba - na - nas, a - vo - ca - dos,

8vb

Senza misura

Militant tango tempo

90 *Spoken ominously:*

It is already too late.

Play ominous chord cluster with both palms

mp

93 **f** Spoken: rising to a shout . . .

The people have begun to paint their slogans on the walls —

96 **molto rall.** **ff** *à la Pagliacci*

MAN - GOES O MUER - TE

melodramatically, of course *militantly*

ff

Ped. * Ped. *

99 **Pressing forward** **mf** *militantly*

And the may - or has re-

mf

102

- ceived a list of de - mands:

105

f Man-goes. Man-goes. Man-goes. Man-goes. Man - goes.

Senza misura
mp longingly

110

Whispered passionately Calypso, anyone?

Man-goes...

sharp and precise
mp

About **Trouble in a Minnesota Town**:

My friend Sam Bates could hardly contain his glee when he introduced me to Neal Bowers' poem, "Trouble in a Minnesota Town." He knew it would be love at first sight. The instant I read the climactic proclamation "MANGOES O MUERTE" I mentally began to set Bowers' whimsical words to music.

Creating a musical vocabulary as colorful as the poem's own freewheeling idiom was a giddy experience. I had never combined music from such vastly different styles before! During this process I thought frequently about Yehudi Wyner, a former composition teacher who also occasionally delighted in weaving diverse musical threads together.

When I put the finishing touches on *Trouble in a Minnesota Town* I had no idea how the song would be received by audiences. But I was certain of one thing. It might be the first genre-bending song I ever composed, but it certainly wouldn't be my last! – E.A.



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Neal Bowers grew up in Clarksville, Tennessee. He received a PhD from the University of Florida, and taught for many years at Iowa State University in Ames. His poetry collections include *Night Vision*, *Lost in the Heartland*, and *Out of the South*, which won the Society of Midland Authors 2002 Poetry Prize. A recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship and the Frederick Bock Prize from Poetry magazine, his poetry has also appeared in the *Sewanee Review*, *Poetry* and the *New Yorker*.

His memoir *Words for the Taking: The Hunt for a Plagiarist* recounts his experience of searching for a plagiarist who had published his poems in several poetry journals, leading Bowers to explore the deeper implications of plagiarism. His other works include the novel *Loose Ends* and *Cats Rule: The Bookstore Cat's Guide to the Care and Training of Humans*.

Selected Vocal Music by Elizabeth Alexander

A Garret of Old Playthings (Carl Sandburg)
high voice, piano • SEA-028-00

A Love Like That (Hafiz/Ladinsky)
low voice, piano • SEA-094-00
medium voice, piano • SEA-094-01
high voice, piano • SEA-094-02

Die Gedanken Sind Frei (German protest song, arr. Alexander)
Vocal Duet: low voice, high voice, piano • SEA-087-01

Grace (Elizabeth Alexander)
low voice, piano • SEA-127-00
medium voice, piano • SEA-127-01
high voice, piano • SEA-127-02

I Write This Poem Out of Darkness (George Ella Lyon)
Vocal Trio: SSA, flute, violin, piano • SEA-024-01

I'll Tell You a Story, then... (Nancy White)
low voice, piano • SEA-069-00
medium voice, piano • SEA-069-01
high voice, piano • SEA-069-02

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (Polish carol, arr. Alexander)
Vocal Trio: SSA a cappella • SEA-020-00

Jo! (The Edict of Torda)
Vocal Trio: SSA a cappella • SEA-092-00

My Aunt Gives Me a Clarinet Lesson (Gregory Djanikian)
soprano, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion • SEA-053-00

No One Gets a Program (Dutch proverb, Elizabeth Alexander)
Vocal Duet: low voice, medium voice, piano • SEA-095-07

Oath Taking (Opal Palmer Adisa)
high voice, piano • SEA-073-00

On the Edge of the Water (Elizabeth Alexander)
low voice, piano • SEA-083-00

Sleep Song (Ann Silsbee)
low voice, piano • SEA-61-00
medium voice, piano • SEA-061-01
high voice, piano • SEA-061-02

The Eternal One (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
low voice, piano • SEA-093-00
medium voice, piano • SEA-093-01
high voice, piano • SEA-093-02

The Gospel Isn't Written in the Bible Alone (Elizabeth Alexander)
low voice, piano • SEA-082-00
medium-high voice, piano • SEA-082-02

Trouble in a Minnesota Town (Neal Bowers)
medium voice, piano • SEA-047-01
high voice, piano • SEA-047-02