

A night sky filled with stars over a landscape of sand dunes. The sky is dark blue and black, with numerous white stars of varying sizes. The horizon is visible in the distance, with some faint lights. The foreground shows the smooth, undulating curves of sand dunes, illuminated by a soft, ambient light.

Sleep, Sleep, Happy Child

mixed chorus, solo soprano, violin, cello, and chimes

Music and text by

Dominick DiOrio

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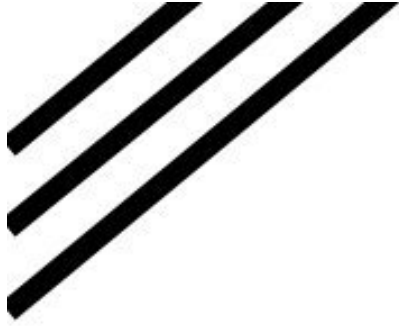
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Sleep, Sleep, Happy Child

for mixed chorus, solo soprano, violin, cello, and chimes

May 2020

Dominick DiOrio

*Commissioned by and dedicated to the South Bend Chamber Singers
Nancy Menk, Artistic Director*

Sleep, Sleep, Happy Child

for mixed chorus, solo soprano, violin, cello, and chimes

Music by Dominick DiOrio (b. 1984)
After “A Cradle Song” by William Blake (1757-1827)

Duration: 6 ½ minutes

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Dominick DiOrio is a conductor and composer who has won widespread acclaim for his contributions to American music. Whether leading an ensemble or crafting a new score, he brings equal passion and determination to his work in vocal and instrumental music, and he has been recognized with The American Prizes in both Choral Composition (2014) and Choral Performance (2019). He is the 14th Artistic Director & Conductor of the Mendelssohn Club Chorus of Philadelphia.

DiOrio is also a member of the choral conducting faculty at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, a position he has held since 2012. At IU, he leads the select, new music chamber chorus NOTUS, a group that he has elevated to national acclaim through commissions, recording projects, and invited performances at regional and national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). NOTUS' debut album, *Of Radiance & Refraction*, featured the world premiere recordings of five commissioned works.

An accomplished conductor, DiOrio has conducted ensembles around the world, from the Houston Chamber Choir and Choral Arts Initiative in the USA to Allmänna Sångern and Ars Veritas abroad. He has collaborated with many of today's leading composers and his repertoire spans the gamut of path-breaking works from the 20th and 21st centuries. As a composer, DiOrio has been hailed for a keenly intelligent, evocative style, which shows “a tour de force of inventive thinking and unique colour” (Gramophone), and his over 50 published works have appeared at major venues around the world including the Sydney Opera House, Lincoln Center, and Carnegie Hall. DiOrio's recent commissioning partners include the Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble & Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, The Choral Arts Society of Washington, and “The President's Own” United States Marine Band.

DiOrio currently serves as president of the National Collegiate Choral Organization and as chair of ACDA's National Standing Committee on Composition Initiatives. DiOrio earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the Yale School of Music, as well as the MMA and MM in conducting from Yale and the BM in composition from Ithaca College.

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Composer's Note

When Nancy Menk approached me to write a new work for the South Bend Chamber Singers, I was overjoyed. Nancy is one of our profession's stalwart supporters of living composers, having commissioned, premiered, and recorded dozens upon dozens of new choral works throughout her career. For this project, Nancy requested a new work for their concert in December 2020, something appropriate for the holiday season.

Sleep, Sleep, Happy Child is a combination of two much older historical texts. The first is the William Blake poem, "A Cradle Song," which exists in many versions and editions. I've chosen one of the eight stanza versions for this work, which I segment and deploy throughout the work out of order. The second work is the music—and occasionally the text—of the famous Coventry Carol, in its oldest surviving version deployed in a mystery play from the 16th century. These two historical sources are juxtaposed to illustrate the oft-forgotten dark side to the Christmas story—Herod's deplorable infanticide—while also drawing our attention to full arc of Jesus' story, from newborn babe to sacrificial lamb.

This work was written during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has killed a still unknown number of people worldwide, including many young children. There is no better way to remember those lost to us than with music of beauty and resolve. I dedicate this work fondly to Nancy and the South Bend Chamber Singers, as well as to the many lost loved ones that have fallen to this virus. May we remember them with solace in song.

-- Dominick DiOrio
May 2020

“A Cradle Song”

by William Blake (1757-1827)

SWEET dreams, form a shade
O'er my lovely infant's head;
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams
By happy, silent, moony beams.

Sweet sleep, with soft down
Weave thy brows an infant crown.
Sweet sleep, Angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles, in the night
Hover over my delight;
Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,
All creation slept and smil'd;
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Holy image I can trace.
Sweet babe, once like thee,
Thy Maker lay and wept for me,

Wept for me, for thee, for all,
When He was an infant small.
Thou His image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee,

Smiles on thee, on me, on all;
Who became an infant small.
Infant smiles are His own smiles;
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

Commissioned by and dedicated to the South Bend Chamber Singers, Nancy Menk, Artistic Director

Sleep, Sleep, Happy Child

for mixed chorus, solo soprano, violin, cello, and chimes

After "A Cradle Song" by
William Blake (1757-1827)

Music by
Dominick DiOrio (b. 1984)

Peaceful and still $\text{♩} = 80$

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-6. The score includes parts for Chimes, Violin, Cello, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 6/4. The tempo is marked "Peaceful and still" with a quarter note equal to 80 beats per minute. The Chimes part starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo to mezzo-piano (*mp*). The Violin and Cello parts also start with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) are currently silent.

Musical score for the second system, measures 7-12. This system features the Violin (Vln.) and Cello (Vc.) parts. The Violin part begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The Cello part also begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. Both parts feature sustained notes with phrasing slurs.

Musical score for the third system, measures 13-18. This system features the Chimes (Ch.), Violin (Vln.), and Cello (Vc.) parts. The Chimes part begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The Violin and Cello parts also begin with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The system concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Ch. *p*

Vln. *p* niente

Vc. *p* niente

S. *pp*
Sleep, sleep, hap - py child, All cre - a - tion slept and

A. *pp*
Sleep, sleep, hap - py child, All cre - a - tion slept and

T. *pp*
Sleep, sleep, hap - py child, All cre - a - tion slept and

B. *pp*
Sleep, sleep, hap - py child, All cre - a - tion slept and



S. smil'd; Sleep, sleep, hap - py sleep, While o'er thee thy

A. smil'd; Sleep, sleep, hap - py sleep, While o'er thee thy

T. smil'd; Sleep, sleep, hap - py sleep, While o'er thee thy

B. smil'd; Sleep, sleep, hap - py sleep, While o'er thee thy

Ch. *mp* *p*

Vln. *p*

Vc. *p*

Soprano Solo

Sweet dreams, form a shade O'er my love-ly in - fant's head;—

S. mo - ther weep.

A. mo - ther weep.

T. mo - ther weep.

B. mo - ther weep.



39

Vln. *mp* *sub mf* *p*

Vc. *mp* *sub mf* *p*

S. Sweet dreams of plea - sant streams By hap - py,

Ch.

Vln.

Vc.

S.
si - lent, moo-ny beams. _____

Sweet babe in thy face Ho - ly i - mage

A.
Sweet babe, in thy face Ho - ly i - mage

T.
Sweet babe _____ in thy face Ho - ly i - mage

B.
Sweet babe in thy face Ho - ly i - mage

p *mp* *mp* *p* *p* *p* *p*



S.
I can trace. Sweet babe, _____ once like thee,

A.
I can trace. Sweet babe, _____ once like thee, _____

T.
I can trace. Sweet babe, _____ once like thee,

B.
I can trace. Sweet _____ babe, _____ once like thee, _____

