

031.20

SHARA NOVA

Owl Song

From "Winter Hymns"

for SSA choir with divisi, harp, and viola (2024)

Blue Sword Publishing

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Music and Lyrics by
Shara Nova, 2024.

Instrumental arrangements and
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Owl Song

from “Winter Hymns”

for SSA choir with divisi, harp, and viola

Shara Nova, 2024 — Instrumentals arr. J. Clay Gonzalez — Duration ca. 3’45”

Divisi

The choir is divided into three equal-sized sections; Soprano 1, Soprano 2, and Alto. A soloist is designated from the S1 section.

Commissioning Information

Commissioned by iSing Silicon Valley, conducted by Jennah Delp. Premiered December 2, 2023 at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church featuring harpist Jieyin Wu and violist Lesley Roberston.

Instrumentation

For this piece, the choir is accompanied by a viola and a harp. The harp part can be substituted for a piano in no harp is available, though some adaptation may be needed to make the part idiomatic.

Program Note

As midwinter approaches, many people slow down a bit to reflect, and to listen to the world around them. The internality of the season invites us to take stock of what we have, and grieve what we’ve lost. For many, it’s a time to pay attention to the relationships that give our lives meaning.

“Winter Hymns” brings us into the emotional world that characterizes these end-of-year reflections, often using nature as a lens.

Winter is a time of profound changes in the natural world, where the colors of fall give way to the austerity of December. These changes affect us deeply, shaping our moods and outlook. Within winter’s gloom, though, are hints of abundance. The vibrancy of an evergreen in snow. A glimpse of a silent barred owl. Stars emerging from a brilliant winter sunset. A flash of red as a cardinal flies by.

In “Winter Hymns,” these images lead us into a space of celebration and reflection, where we consider what connects us to loved ones, to nature, and to home.

Editions

This piece is a movement of the larger work “Winter Hymns,” excerpted for stand alone performance.

[031.20] “Owl Song” from Winter Hymns

The other three movements from “Winter Hymns” are also available as separate editions.

[031.10] “Come ‘Round the Evergreen,” from Winter Hymns

[031.30] “The Last Light” from Winter Hymns

[031.40] “When Cardinals Appear, Spirits Are Near” from Winter Hymns.

Finally, all four movements are available in a single edition.

[031.00] Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, harp, and viola

Lyrics

(Who, who, who, who,
Who, who, who, who,)

Listen long enough,
And the wind will tell a tale
of the goings and comings of the creatures,
Of the movements of the fox upon the rabbit’s trail.

I hear all the laughter and confusion,
I hear all their hopes and illusions
By listening quietly,
Listening so quietly
to the falling snow,
The world I know,
The world I know,
The world I know,

(Who, who, who, who,
Who, who, who, who).

VOCAL RANGES

The image displays four musical staves, each representing a different vocal range. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are as follows:

- Soprano Solo:** A half note on G4 (middle C), followed by a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on Bb4.
- Soprano 1:** A half note on G4, followed by a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on Bb4.
- Soprano 2:** A half note on G4, followed by a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on Bb4.
- Alto:** A half note on G4, followed by a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on Bb4.

The notes for Soprano Solo, Soprano 1, and Soprano 2 are positioned on the same staff lines, while the Alto part is positioned on a lower staff line.

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Owl Song

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from "Winter Hymns"

SHARA NOVA

♩ = 66, swinging

Solo
as a Barred Owl

SHARA NOVA (2024)
ARR. J. Clay Gonzalez

mf

*shaky gliss.

The first system of the score includes three staves. The top staff is for the Soprano (S) voice, written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a 12/8 time signature. It contains the lyrics "Who, who, who, who, _____ Who, who, who," with a "shaky gliss." instruction above a long note. The middle staff is for the Viola, and the bottom staff is for the Harp, both in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The harp part includes a chord diagram for a triad.

The second system continues the score with three staves. The top staff is for the Soprano (S) voice, with lyrics "who, _____ Lis - - ten long e-nough," and a dynamic marking of **p**. A box labeled "A" is placed above the staff. The middle staff is for the Viola (Vla.), and the bottom staff is for the Harp (Hp.), both in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The harp part features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of **p**.

"Owl Song", from Winter Hymns — Shara Nova — Full Score

8

S

And the wind will tell a tale,

Hp.

10

B

S

Of the go - - ings and com - - ings

Hp.

12

S

of the crea - - - tures, Of the

Hp.

"Owl Song", from Winter Hymns — Shara Nova — Full Score

14

S *p*
move - ments of the fox up-on the rab - bit's

Hp. *mf*
A_b to A₄

C

17

S *mp*
trail. I hear all the laugh - ter and con-romantically

Vla. *pp*

Hp. *p*
A₄ to A_b

20

S *mp*
fu - sion, I hear all their hopes and il-

Vla. *mf*

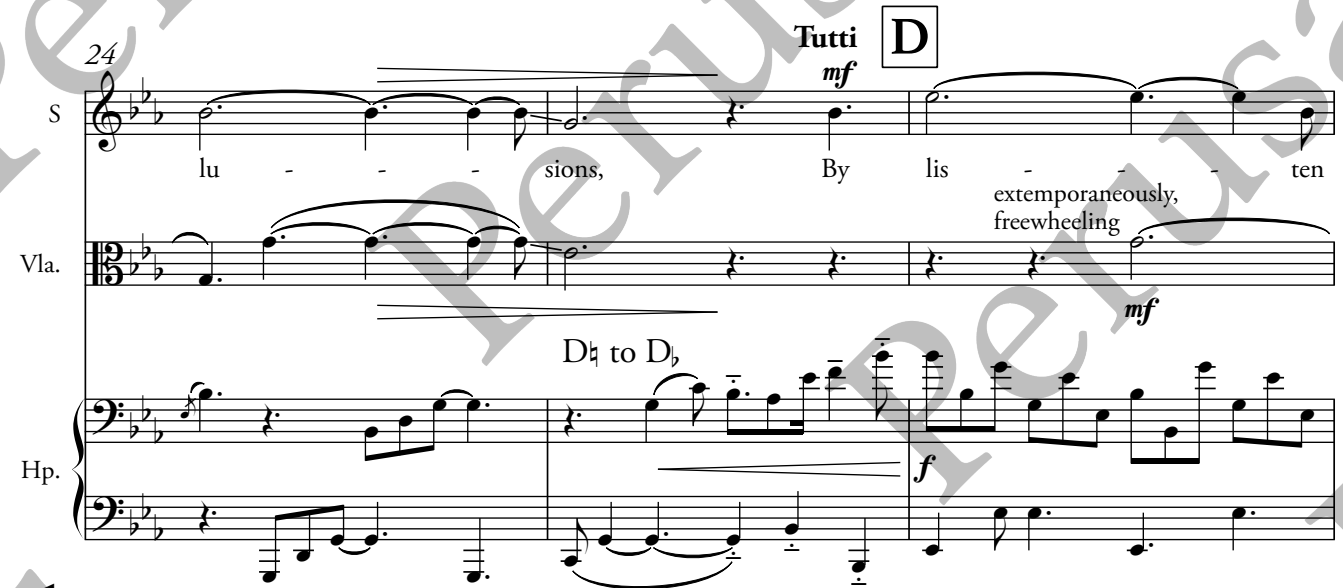
Hp.

24

S *Tutti* *mf* **D**
lu - - - sions, By lis - extemporaneously, ten
freewheeling

Vla. *mf*

Hp. *f*
D₄ to D₃



27

S *mf*
ing qui - - et - ly,

Vla.

Hp.

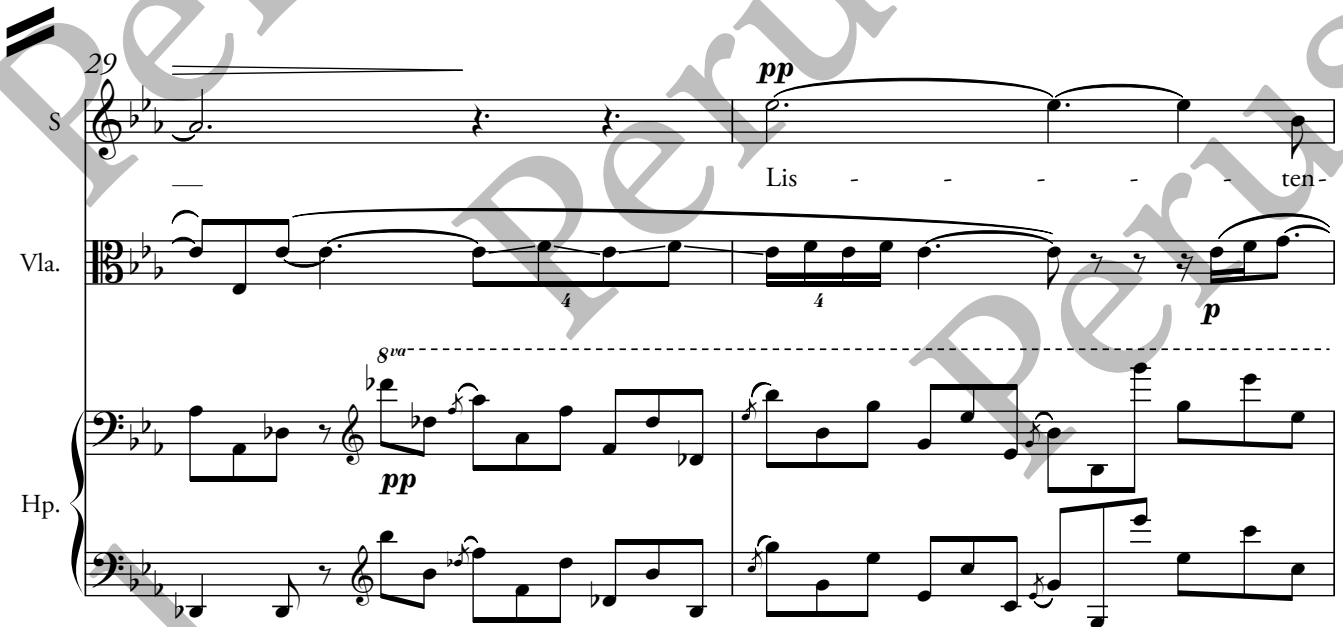


29

S *pp*
Lis - - - - ten-

Vla. *p*

Hp. *pp*
sva-



"Owl Song", from Winter Hymns — Shara Nova — Full Score

31

S
ing — so qui - et - ly — to the

Vla.

Hp.

34

S
fall - - - ing snow,

Vla.

Hp.

E

36

S *f*
The world I know, The world

A *f*
The world I know, The world

Vla. *mf*

Hp. *f*
E_b to E_♯
D_b to D_♯ E_♯ to E_b

39

S I know, The world I know.

A I know, The world I know.

Vla. *pp*

Hp.