

031.70

SHARA NOVA

# Owl Song

From “Winter Hymns”

for SSA choir with divisi, piano, 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, piano, 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 piano.

### 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 loves ones, to nature, and to home.

### Editions

The original version of “Winter Hymns” is written for SSA choir, harp, and viola.

The following edition contains all four movements:

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

Additionally, each movement is available as stand-alone works.

[031.10] “Come ‘Round the Evergreen,” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, harp, and viola

[031.20] “Owl Song” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, harp, and viola

[031.30] “The Last Light” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, harp, and viola

[031.40] “When Cardinals Appear, Spirits Are Near”, for SSA choir, harp, and viola

An edition that includes all four movements and substitutes the harp for a piano is available, rewriting various passages to be more idomatic for the piano.

[031.50] Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, piano, and viola

This edition features the second movement as a stand-alone work, with the harp substituted for piano.

[031.70] “Owl Song” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, piano, and viola

The other three movements, as arrangements for SSA, piano, and viola, are also available stand-alone.

[031.60] “Come ‘Round the Evergreen,” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, piano, and viola

*(continued on next page)*

*Editions, continued.*

[031.80] “The Last Light” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir, piano, and viola

[031.90] “When Cardinals Appear, Spirits Are Near”, for SSA choir, piano, and viola

Finally, versions of all these editions for SSA and piano only are also available.

[031.A0] Winter Hymns, for SSA choir and piano

[031.B0] “Come ‘Round the Evergreen,” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir and piano

[031.C0] “Owl Song” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir and piano

[031.D0] “The Last Light” from Winter Hymns, for SSA choir and piano

[031.E0] “When Cardinals Appear, Spirits Are Near”, for SSA choir and piano

**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 (below the staff), followed by a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on Bb4.
- Soprano 1:** A half note on G4 (below the staff), followed by a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on Bb4.
- Soprano 2:** A half note on G4 (below the staff), followed by a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on Bb4.
- Alto:** A half note on G4 (below the staff), 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 higher on the staff than the notes for the Alto, indicating a higher vocal range.



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harpist Jieyin Wu and violist Lesley Roberston.

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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.

Musical score for the first system. The vocal line (S) is in 12/8 time and features a melody with lyrics: "Who, who, who, who, \_\_\_\_\_ Who, who, who,". The Viola and Piano parts are currently silent, indicated by a large equals sign (=) on the left.

Musical score for the second system. The vocal line (S) continues with lyrics: "who, \_\_\_\_\_ Lis - - ten long e-nough,". A box labeled 'A' is placed above the vocal line. The Viola (Vla.) and Piano (Pno.) parts are active. The Piano part includes the instruction *sotto voce* and a dynamic marking of *p*. The Viola part is silent.

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

8

S

And the wind will tell a tale,

Pno.

10

**B**

S

Of the go - - ings and com - - ings

Pno.

12

S

of the crea - - - tures, Of the

Pno.

14 *p*

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

Pno. *mf*

Red

**C**

17 *mp*

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

Vla. *pp*

Pno. *p*

Red

20 *mp*

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

Vla. *mf*

Pno.

Red

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

**Tutti** **D**  
*mf*

24

S  
lu - - - sions, By lis extemporaneously, ten  
freewheeling

Vla.

Pno.

*f*

27

S  
ing qui - - et - ly,

Vla.

Pno.

*mf*

*sim.*

29

S  
Lis - - - ten-

Vla.

Pno.

*pp*

*p*

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

31

S  
ing — so qui - et - ly — to the

Vla.

Pno.

34

S  
fall - - - ing snow,

Vla.

Pno.

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

**E**

36

S *f*  
The world I know, The world

A *f*  
The world I know, The world

Vla. *mf*

Pno. *f*

39

S I know, The world I know.

A I know, The world I know.

Vla. *pp*

Pno.