

031.D0

SHARA NOVA

The Last Light

From “Winter Hymns”

for SSA choir (with divisi) and piano (2025)

Blue Sword Publishing

Copyright © 2025 Blue Sword Publishing (ASCAP)
International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Music and Lyrics by
Shara Nova, 2024.

Instrumental arrangements and
engraving by J. Clay Gonzalez.

Unauthorized reproduction of this
publication is prohibited by Federal
law and subject to criminal prosecution.

The Last Light

from “Winter Hymns”

for SSA choir (with divisi) and piano

Shara Nova, 2024 — Instrumentals arr. J. Clay Gonzalez — Duration ca. 3’10”

Divisi

The choir is divided into three equal-sized sections; Soprano 1, Soprano 2, and Alto. Alto is further divided into A1 and A2.

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 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 loved 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

Editions that substitute the harp part for a piano are available, rewriting various passages to be more idiomatic for the piano.

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

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

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

[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

(continued on next page)

Editions, continued.

This edition features the second movement, arranged for choir and piano only (no viola.)

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

Versions of all editions for SSA and piano only (no viola) 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.E0] “When Cardinals Appear, Spirits Are Near”, for SSA choir and piano

Lyrics

The last star, ah
The last starlight, ah,
The last star, ah,
The last starlight, ah.

To appear in the night sky,
above the top of the trees,
Shines to tell me,
I have made it the long way home.

The last light, ah,
Light, ah.

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 G3, followed by a quarter note on A3, and a quarter note on Bb3.

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.

The Last Light

for SSA choir with divisi, piano, and viola

from "Winter Hymns"

SHARA NOVA

SHARA NOVA (2024)
ARR. J. Clay Gonzalez

Relentlessly, ♩ = 148

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of ♩ = 148. It features four vocal staves (S1, S2, A1, A2) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are marked *mf* and sing the lyrics "The last star,". The piano part is marked *sempre p* and includes the instruction "metronomically, never slowing down". The score is divided into four measures, with the piano accompaniment featuring a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and triplets.

5

S1
ah,

S2
ah, The

A1
ah, The

A2
ah, The

Pno.

ff *pp*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score contains five staves. The top four staves are for vocalists: Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), Alto 1 (A1), and Alto 2 (A2). Each vocal line begins with a measure containing a whole note chord, followed by a rest. The second measure of each vocal line features a melodic phrase starting with a half note 'ah,' followed by a triplet of eighth notes, and then another triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) is shown in the bottom two staves, consisting of a continuous eighth-note triplet pattern in both the treble and bass clefs. The score includes dynamic markings of *ff* (fortissimo) and *pp* (pianissimo) at the bottom.

9 *f*

S1 last star light,

S2 last star light,

A1 last star light,

A2 last star light,

Pno. *mf* *mp*

A *f*

f

f

f

The musical score consists of five staves. The vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) are in treble clef and feature lyrics: "last star light,". Each vocal line begins with a measure of music marked with a dynamic of *f*. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The right hand features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, often grouped in threes, with a dynamic of *mf*. The left hand features a more melodic line with triplets and a dynamic of *mp*. A section marked with a box 'A' and a dynamic of *f* begins in the second measure of the vocal parts, where the lyrics "light," are sung. The piano accompaniment continues with its rhythmic pattern throughout the section.

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first four systems are for vocal parts: S1, S2, A1, and A2. Each vocal part begins with a measure marked '13' containing a long, sustained note. The vocal lines then move to a new melodic phrase starting with a triplet of eighth notes, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The vocalists sing 'ah,' following this phrase. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) is shown in the fifth system, consisting of two staves. The right hand features a continuous stream of eighth notes with a triplet pattern, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained notes and some triplet figures. The piano part is marked with dynamics *ff*, *p*, and *ff*.

17 **B** *mf*

S1 The last star,

S2 *mf* The last star,

A1 *mf* The last star,

A2 *mf* The last star,

Pno. *ff* *pp*

21

S1

S2

A1

A2

Pno.

ah,

ah,

ah,

ah,

The

ff

mp

mp

ff

mp

25 *f* **C** *f*

S1
last star light,

S2
star light,

A1
star light,

A2
last star light,

Pno.
sweetly

Detailed description: This page of a musical score for 'The Last Light' features five staves. The top four staves are for vocalists: Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), Alto 1 (A1), and Alto 2 (A2). The bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment (Pno.). The score begins at measure 25. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present at the start of each vocal line. A rehearsal mark 'C' is enclosed in a box above the S1 staff. The lyrics are: S1: 'last star light,'; S2: 'star light,'; A1: 'star light,'; A2: 'last star piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand part with triplets and a left-hand part with chords and triplets. The word 'sweetly' is written above the piano part in the final measure.

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first four systems are vocal parts: S1 (Soprano 1), S2 (Soprano 2), A1 (Alto 1), and A2 (Alto 2). The fifth system is the piano accompaniment (Pno.).

- S1:** Treble clef, starts at measure 29. Features a long melisma on the syllable "ah." with a slur over the notes. Includes triplet markings over the final notes.
- S2:** Treble clef, similar to S1, with a melisma on "ah." and triplet markings.
- A1:** Treble clef, features a melisma on "ah." with a slur over the notes.
- A2:** Treble clef, features a melisma on "ah." with a slur over the notes and triplet markings.
- Pno.:** Grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The right hand has a complex rhythmic pattern with many triplets. The left hand has a more melodic line with slurs and a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) in the final measure.

33

S1

S2

A1

A2

Pno.

D *with quiet energy*
mp

with quiet energy
mp

with quiet energy
mp

with quiet energy
mp

sempre pp

ppp

f

37

S1 *mf*
in the night sky, A - bove

S2 *mf*
in the night sky, A - bove

A1 *mf*
in the night sky, A - bove

A2
in the night sky,

Pno.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score contains five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts for Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), Alto 1 (A1), and Alto 2 (A2). Each vocal line begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: 'in the night sky, A - bove'. The first three vocal parts (S1, S2, A1) include a dynamic marking of *mf* and a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) is on the bottom staff, featuring a complex texture with triplets of eighth notes in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand. A watermark 'Perusal Perusal Perusal' is visible diagonally across the page.

41 *f*

S1 the top of the trees, Shines

S2 the top of the trees, Shines

A1 the top of the trees, Shines

A2

Pno. *p* *mp* no ped.

E

The musical score consists of five staves. The vocal parts are S1, S2, A1, and A2. The piano accompaniment is labeled 'Pno.' and includes a section marked '8va'.

S1: Treble clef, starting at measure 45. Features a triplet of eighth notes and a melodic line with lyrics "to tell". Dynamics include *mf*.

S2: Treble clef, starting at measure 45. Features a triplet of eighth notes and a melodic line with lyrics "to tell". Dynamics include *mf*.

A1: Treble clef, starting at measure 45. Features a melodic line with lyrics "to tell". Dynamics include *mf*.

A2: Treble clef, mostly rests.

Pno.: Grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Starts with a triplet of eighth notes in the bass clef (*mf*). The right hand has a melodic line with a section marked "8va" (8va *mf*). The bass clef continues with a triplet of eighth notes (*mp*) and other rhythmic patterns.

49

S1
me,

S2
me, I have made it the long way,

A1
me, I have made it the long way,

A2

Pno.
dying away
pp

F

55

S1

p I have made it the long way _____ home. _____ *pp*

S2

the long way _____ home. _____ *pp*

A1

the long way, _____ mm. _____ *pp*

A2

the long way, _____ mm. _____ *pp*

Pno.

63 **G** *n* **rit.**

S1

S2

A1

A2

Pno. *mp* *f* *8va* 3


H

a tempo


S1



S2



A1



A2



Pno.



76

S1 *f* light,

S2 *f* light,

A1 *mp* *f*
The last light,

A2 *mp* *f*
The last light,

Pno. *ff*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, page 17, contains measures 76 through 80. It features five staves: two soprano parts (S1, S2), two alto parts (A1, A2), and a piano accompaniment (Pno.). The vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) are in treble clef. S1 and S2 have rests in measures 76-78 and enter in measure 79 with a long note, marked *f*, with the lyrics "light,". A1 and A2 enter in measure 76 with a long note, marked *mp*, with the lyrics "The last light,". In measure 80, A1 and A2 continue with a long note, marked *f*. The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). It features triplet patterns in measures 76-78 and a dense, fast-moving texture in measures 79-80, marked *ff*.

The musical score consists of five staves. The top four staves are for vocal parts: S1 (Soprano 1), S2 (Soprano 2), A1 (Alto 1), and A2 (Alto 2). The bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment (Pno.).

- Staff S1:** Starts with a treble clef and a tempo marking of 80. It features a long melisma with a slur over the first two measures. The vocal line resumes in the third measure with a triplet of notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mf* and the syllable "ah,".
- Staff S2:** Similar to S1, with a melisma in the first two measures and a triplet of notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mf* and "ah," in the third measure.
- Staff A1:** Features a melisma in the first two measures and a single note (G4) marked *mf* and "ah," in the third measure.
- Staff A2:** Features a melisma in the first two measures and a triplet of notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mf* and "ah," in the third measure.
- Staff Pno.:** The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs). It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth-note triplets throughout. The first measure of the piano part is marked *f*.