

DT0119.1 | A SEED MARKS TIME | TRUMBORE
SSAA CHORUS, STRING QUARTET & PIANO

A SEED MARKS TIME

for SSAA Chorus,
String Quartet & Piano

FULL SCORE


daletrumbore
c o m p o s e r

Text

TIME

I wonder how a seed marks time,
tucked into the silent earth.
Does it scratch a tally
on the inside of its husk,
numbering the days until spring,
or does everything fade
into a passing blur without
the dance of bees and the
steady tick of sun across the sky?
And what about the dormant summer grass,
lying golden under the sun?
Is it passive through the drought,
or are unseen roots searching thirstily
for remembered moisture?
I know how the sunflower
turns its bright head,
oriented through the hours.
But what of the birds
who are waiting for its seeds
to ripen, or for whatever it is
that sets them on their migratory way?
Do they have some internal calendar
with days marked in red, or do they move
through a blur of time,
forgetting appointments, neglecting obligations,
or so lost in the work of the day
that dusk goes unnoticed,
and it is suddenly dark?
Are they lost, or are they
simply listening to the earth
as it chants, low and slow:
Now this. Now this. Now this.

—Lynn Ungar, from *These Days: Poetry of the Pandemic Age*. © 2020 Lynn Ungar.

Program Note

Lynn Ungar's text for *A Seed Marks Time* initially appears to be about nature, contemplating how seeds mark time underground. Near the end of this poem, though, we see ourselves reflected in it. After all, it's not the birds who "move through a blur of time, / forgetting appointments, neglecting obligations" and getting so lost in their work that they forget to look up—it's us. These last few lines remind us to reconsider how we mark time: Are we simply counting minutes until it's time for the next task on our to-do list, or are we consciously noticing the beauty around us? The final line leaves us with a sung meditation that turns into a whisper: "Now this. Now this. Now this."

A Seed Marks Time is dedicated to Eric Nelson on the occasion of his 25th Anniversary with Atlanta Master Chorale, with gratitude for his contributions to the choral canon and his visionary pursuit of excellence in choral music that touches spirit. This piece is commissioned and premiered by Atlanta Master Chorale (Eric Nelson, Artistic Director) and guest conducted by Jonathan Easter.

Performance Notes

Choir: Notes in parentheses may be omitted (mouthed, but not sung) if out of range.

Slide through the entire marked duration of a glissando.

Strings: When a glissando is marked between two notes, bow them separately unless otherwise indicated.

Slide through the entire marked duration of a glissando.

Piano: Boxes indicate a brief gesture that should be repeated for as long as is indicated by the following arrow. Notes within a box should be played in any order, rippling, ebbing and flowing in tempo like wind chimes.

Duration: ca. 11 minutes.

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A Seed Marks Time

for SSAA Chorus, String Quartet & Piano

Text by Lynn Ungar

Music by Dale Trumbore

Inquisitive; ♩ = 100 (♩ = ♩ throughout)

SOPRANO
I won-der how a seed marks time,

ALTO
I won-der how a seed marks time,

Violin 1
p *f* *p*

Violin 2
p *f* *p*

Viola
col legno battuto, jeté
mf *f possible*

Violoncello
p *f* *p*

Piano

8 **A**
S. *mf* *f* *mp* *p* *mp*
I won-der how a seed marks time, tucked in-to the si-lent earth.

A. *mf* *p* *mp*
I won-der how a seed marks mm earth.

Vln. 1
mf *f* *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *p*

Vln. 2
mf *f* *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *p*

Vla.
ord.
mf *f* *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *p*

Vc.
mf *f* *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *p*

Pno.
mf *f*

A Seed Marks Time
Full Score

2

16 **B** *mf*
S. Does it scratch a tal - ly _____
A. Does it scratch a tal - ly *mf*

Vln. 1 sul pont., scratchy *pp* *f*
Vln. 2 col legno battuto, jeté *mf* *f possible* *mp* *mf* *f* ord.
Vla. *pp* *f*
Vc. *pp* *f*
Pno.

23
S. Does it scratch a tal - ly _____ Does it scratch a tal - ly _____ Does it
A. Does it scratch a tal - ly Does it scratch a tal - ly

Vln. 1 *mf*
Vln. 2 *mf*
Vla. *mf*
Vc. sul pont., scratchy *mf*
Pno. *p* *f*

A Seed Marks Time
Full Score

C

S. 1
scratch a tal - ly _____ Does it scratch a tal - ly _____ on the in - side of its husk, *f*

S. 2
mf Does it scratch a tal - ly _____ Does it scratch a tal - ly on the in - side of its husk, *f*

A.
Does it scratch a tal - ly _____ Does it scratch a tal - ly on the in - side of its husk, *f*

Vln. 1
ff ord.

Vln. 2
ff ord.

Vla.
ff ord.

Vc.
ff ord.

Pno.
f *ff* *p*

Vln. 1
pp rit. Taking time *mf*

Vln. 2
pp *mf*

Vla.
pp *mf*

Vc.
pp *mf*

Pno.
p *mp* *mp* *mf*

A Seed Marks Time
Full Score

4

poco accel. In time; ♩ = ca. 100

D

S. 1
num - ber - ing the days num - ber - ing the days num - ber - ing the

S. 2
num - ber - ing the days num - ber - ing the days

A.
num - ber - ing the days num - ber - ing the days

Vln. 1
pp col legno battuto, jeté *mf* 3

Vln. 2
pp col legno battuto, jeté *mf* 3

Vla.
pp col legno battuto, jeté *mf* 3

Vc.
pp col legno battuto, jeté *mf* 3

Pno.
mp

||

E

S. 1
days un - til spring, *ff*

S. 2
num - ber - ing the days un - til spring, *ff*

A.
num - ber - ing the days un - til spring, *ff*

Vln. 1
3 *f* ord. *mf* *ff*

Vln. 2
3 *f* ord. *mf* *ff*

Vla.
3 *f* ord. *mf* *ff*

Vc.
3 *f* ord. *mf* *ff*

Pno.
mf *f*

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A Seed Marks Time
Full Score

F Slightly slower; ♩ = ca. 84

S. 1 *pp* *mf* *p* *poco accel.* ♩ = ca. 100 *mp*
or does eve-ry-thing fade in - to a pass - ing blur with - out the dance of bees

S. 2 *mf* *p* *mp*
fade in - to a pass - ing blur with - out the dance of bees

A. *mp* *p* *mp*
fade in - to a pass - ing blur the dance of

Vln. 1 *pp*

Vln. 2 *pp*

Vla.

Vc.

Pno. *mp*

G

S. 1 *mf* *f*
and the stead - y tick of sun a - cross the sky? And what a - bout the

S. 2 *f*
and the stead - y tick of sun a - cross the sky? And what a - bout the

A. *mf* *mf* *f*
bees and the stead - y tick of sun a - cross the sky? And what a - bout the

Vln. 1 *mf* *f* *ff*
pizz. arco

Vln. 2 *mf* *f* *ff*
pizz. arco

Vla. *f* *ff*
pizz. arco

Vc. *mf* *f* *ff*
pizz. arco

Pno. *mf* *f*

Slightly slower;
♩ = ca. 72

81 *rit.*

S. 1
dor - mant sum-mer grass,

S. 2
dor - mant sum-mer grass,

A.
dor - mant sum-mer grass, ly-ing gold - en un-der the sun?

Vln. 1
pp *mf* *ff* *p*

Vln. 2
pp *mf* *ff* *p*

Vla.
pp *mf* *ff* *p*

Vc.
mp *mf* *ff* *p*

Pno.
mp *mf* *f* *p*

89

Vln. 1
f *p* *mf*

Vln. 2
f *mf* *f*

Vla.
f *p* *mf*

Vc.
f *mf* *f*

Pno.
f *p* *f* *mf* *f*

A Seed Marks Time
Full Score

8

97 **H**

S. *mp* Is it pas-sive through the drought, *mf* or are un - seen_ roots search-ing thirst-i-ly_ for re-mem-bered mois - ture?

A. *mp* or are un - seen_ *mf* roots search-ing thirst-i-ly_ for re-mem-bered mois - ture?

Vln. 1 *pp* *mp* *mf*

Vln. 2 *p* *mp* *mf*

Vla. *pp* *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

Pno.

105 *ppp* *mf* *pp* *poco accel.*

S. 1 *ppp* *mf* *pp*

S. 2 *ppp* *mf* *pp*

A. *ppp* *mf* *pp*

Vln. 1 *p* *f* *pp* *f* *ff*

Vln. 2 *p* *f* *pp* *f* *ff*

Vla. *p* *f* *pp* *f* *ff*

Vc. *p* *f* *pp* *f* *ff*

Pno. *mf* *f* *mf*

I Inquisitive; ♩ = 100

molto rit.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. *col legno battuto, jeté*

Vc.

Pno.

J ♩ = ca. 72

S. 1

A.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. *ord.*

Vc.

Pno.

I know how the sun-flo-wer turns its bright head, o-ri-ent-ed through the hours. But

I know how the sun-flo-wer turns its bright head, o-ri-ent-ed through the hours. But

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Here's the next page:

141

S. 1
cal - en - dar _____ with days marked in red, _____ or do they

A.
cal - en - dar _____ with days marked in red, _____ or do they

Vln. 1
f

Vln. 2
f

Vla.
f

Vc.
f

Pno.

147

poco accel. **L** ♩ = ca. 60

S. 1
move through a blur of time, _____ for - get - ting ap - point - ments, ne - glect - ing ob - li - ga - tions,

S. 2
move through a blur of time, _____ for - get - ting ap - point - ments, ne - glect - ing ob - li - ga - tions,

A.
move through a blur of time, _____ for - get - ting ap - point - ments, ne - glect - ing ob - li - ga - tions,

Vln. 1
ff *p* *f* *ff*

Vln. 2
ff *p* *f* *ff*

Vla.
ff *p* *f* *ff*

Vc.
ord. *ff* *p* *f* *ff*

Pno.
f *mp* *ff*

155 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 84$

S. 1 *p* *mp* **M** *pp* *mf*
or so lost or so lost in the work of the

S. 2 *p* *mp* *pp* *mf*
or so lost or so lost

A. *pp* *mf*
or so lost in the work of the

Vln. 1 *p* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf*

Vln. 2 *p* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf*

Vla. *p* *mf* *pp* *mf*

Vc. *p*

Pno. *p*

162

S. 1 *p* *pp* *f*
day that dusk goes un-noticed, and it is sud-den-ly dark?

S. 2 *p* *pp* *f*
day that dusk goes un-noticed, and it is sud-den-ly dark?

A. *p* *pp* *f*
in the work of the day that dusk goes un-noticed, and it is sud-den-ly dark?

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Pno. *p*
rippling freely in any order, slowly, out of time, like wind chimes

poco rit. ♩ = 76 or slightly slower

170

S. 1 *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*
nn

S. 2 *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*
nn

A. *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*
nn

Vln. 1 *pp* *mp* *p*
sul tasto

Vln. 2 *pp* *mp* *p*
sul tasto

Vla. *pp* *mp* *p* *mp*
sul tasto

Vc. *pp* *mp* *p*

Pno. *rippling slows to a stop*

179

S. 1 *p* *mf* **N** *p* *mf* *f*
Are they lost, Are they lost, or are they lis - ten - ing to the earth

S. 2 *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*
Are they lost, Are they lost, or are they sim - ply lis - ten - ing to the earth as it

A. *p* *mf* *f*
Are they lost, or are they sim - ply lis - ten - ing to the earth

Vln. 1 *mf* *f*
ord.

Vln. 2 *mf* *f*
ord.

Vla. *mf* *f*
ord.

Vc.

Pno.

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A Seed Marks Time
Full Score

200

S. 1 *p* *pp*
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

S. 2 *mp*
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

A. *p* *mp*
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

Vln. 1 *p* *pp*

Vln. 2 *p* *pp*

Vla. *p* *pp*

Vc. *p* *pp*

Pno. *p* *pp*

Half the choir whispers; half continues singing

205

S. 1 *Whispering* *ppp*
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this.

S. 2 *Whispering* *ppp*
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this.

A. *Whispering* *ppp*
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Pno. *ppp*