

DT0120 | A SEED MARKS TIME | TRUMBORE
SATB CHORUS & PIANO

A SEED MARKS TIME

for SATB Chorus,
String Quartet & Piano

CHORUS & PIANO
REDUCTION

daletrumbore
c o m p o s e r

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*.

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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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CHORUS &
PIANO REDUCTION

*Dedicated to Eric Nelson on the occasion of his 25th Anniversary with Atlanta Master Chorale,
with gratitude for his contributions to the choral canon
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A Seed Marks Time

for SATB Chorus, String Quartet & Piano

Text by Lynn Ungar

Music by Dale Trumbore

Inquisitive; ♩ = 100 (♩ = ♪ throughout)

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first four systems are for the vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Each system begins with a treble clef (except for Bass which has a bass clef) and a dynamic marking of *f*. The vocal lines are in 4/4 time and feature a complex rhythmic pattern with multiple time signature changes: 4/4, 6/8, 2/4, and 4/4. The lyrics for all parts are: "I won - der how a seed marks time,". The fifth system is for the Piano Reduction, showing the right and left hand staves with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a crescendo hairpin.

SOPRANO
ALTO
TENOR
BASS
Piano Reduction

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

2

4 A *mf*

I won - der how a

mf

I won - der how a

mf

I won - der how a

mf

I won - der how a

mf *p*

3 3

10 *f* *mp* *p* *mp*

seed marks time, tucked in - to the si - lent earth.

p *mp*

seed marks mm earth.

p *mp*

seed marks mm earth.

p *mp*

seed marks mm earth.

10 *f* sub. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

16

B

mf

Does it scratch a tal - ly

mf

Does it scratch a

16

pp

f

22

Does it scratch a tal - ly

Does it

tal - ly

Does it scratch a tal - ly

22

mf

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

27

scratch a tal-ly _____ Does it scratch a tal-ly _____

Does it scratch a tal-ly _____ Does it scratch a tal-ly _____

mf Does it scratch a tal-ly _____ Does it scratch a tal-ly _____

mf Does it scratch a tal-ly _____ *mf* Does it scratch a tal-ly _____

sub. *p* *mf*

32

C

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

Does it scratch a tal-ly on the in-side of its husk,

Does it scratch a tal-ly on the in-side of its husk,

Does it scratch a tal-ly on the in-side of its husk,

f *f* *f* *f*

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A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

E

49 *mp* *ff*
num - ber-ing_ the days un - til spring,
mp *ff*
num - ber-ing_ the days un - til spring,
mp *ff*
days un - til spring,
mp *ff*
days un - til spring,

49 *f* *mf*
Piano accompaniment for measures 49-55, including triplets and dynamic markings.

56 *f* *p* *mf p*
Piano accompaniment for measures 56-61, including dynamic markings.

62 *f*
Piano accompaniment for measures 62-67, including dynamic markings.

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

poco rit.

F Slightly slower; ♩ = ca. 84

Musical score for measures 68-71. The score is in 4/4 time and features four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "or does eve - ry - thing fade in - to a pass - ing". The piano part includes triplets and dynamic markings such as *pp*, *mf*, *mp*, and *p*. A large blue watermark "FOR PREVIEW ONLY" is overlaid on the score.

72

poco accel.

♩ = ca. 100

Musical score for measures 72-75. The score is in 4/4 time and features four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "blur with-out the dance of bees and the". The piano part includes triplets and dynamic markings such as *mp* and *mf*. A large blue watermark "FOR PREVIEW ONLY" is overlaid on the score.

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

G

76 *f*

stead-y tick of sun a-cross the sky? And what a-bout the

stead-y tick of sun a-cross the sky? And what a-bout the

stead-y tick of sun a-cross the sky? And what a-bout the

stead-y tick of sun a-cross the sky? And what a-bout the

76 *f*

81 *rit.* Slightly slower; ♩ = ca. 72

dor-mant sum-mer grass,

pp *mf*

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

pp *mf*

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

81

dor-mant sum-mer grass,

p *mf*

Ped.

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

87

ff p f p

87

88

89

90

91

92

87

88

89

90

91

92

93

f mf f pp

93

94

95

96

97

93

94

95

96

97

H

98

mp mf mp mf

98

99

100

101

102

103

98

99

100

101

102

103

Is it pas - sive through the drought, or are un - seen__

or are un - seen__

98

p mp mf

98

99

100

101

102

103

98

99

100

101

102

103

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A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

112 *poco accel.* **I** Inquisitive; ♩ = 100

mp *f* sub. *p*

117 *molto rit.*

mf *p* *p*

J ♩ = ca. 72

121 *f*

I know how the sun - flo - wer turns its bright head,

f

I know how the sun - flo - wer turns its bright head,

f

121 *f*

f

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

124

o - ri - ent - ed through the hours. But

o - ri - ent - ed through the hours. But

o - ri - ent - ed through the hours. But

o - ri - ent - ed through the hours. But

124

ff *p* *mf* *p*

129

mf what of the birds_ who are wait - ing for its seeds_ to

mf what of the birds_ who are wait - ing for its seeds_ to

mf what of the birds_ who are wait - ing for its seeds_ to

mf what of the birds_ who are wait - ing for its seeds_ to

129

mf *fp*

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

poco accel.

132 *p*

ri - pen, or what - ev - er it is ___ that sets them on their mi - gra - to - ry

ri - pen, or what - ev - er it is ___ that sets them on their mi - gra - to - ry

ri - pen, or what - ev - er it is ___ that sets them on their mi - gra - to - ry

ri - pen, or what - ev - er it is ___ that sets them on their mi - gra - to - ry

132 *f* *p* *mf* 3 3

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 84$ **K**

135 *f* *mf* *mp*

way? oo Do they have some in - ter - nal

way? oo Do they have some in - ter - nal

way? oo Do they have some in - ter - nal

way? oo Do they have some in - ter - nal

135 *f* *p*

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

141

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

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

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

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

141

mf

poco accel. **L** ♩. = ca. 60

move through a blur of time, for - get - ting ap-

move through a blur of time, for - get - ting ap-

move through a blur of time, for - get - ting ap-

move through a blur of time, for - get - ting ap-

147

fp *f*

fp *f*

fp *f*

fp *f*

f *mp* *ff*

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

152 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 84$

p *mp*

point - ments, ne - glect - ing ob - li - ga - tions, or so lost

point - ments, ne - glect - ing ob - li - ga - tions, or so lost

point - ments, ne - glect - ing ob - li - ga - tions,

point - ments, ne - glect - ing ob - li - ga - tions,

152

M *pp* *mf* *p*

or so lost in the work of the day that

pp *mf* *p*

or so lost in the work of the day that

pp *mf* *p*

or so lost in the work of the day that

pp *mf* *p*

or so lost in the work of the day that

158

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

164

pp *f*

dusk goes un - no - ticed, and it is sud - den - ly dark?

pp *f*

dusk goes un - no - ticed, and it is sud - den - ly dark?

pp *f*

dusk goes un - no - ticed, and it is sud - den - ly dark?

pp *f*

dusk goes un - no - ticed, and it is sud - den - ly dark?

rippling freely in any order, slowly, out of time, like wind chimes

164

p

Red.

poco rit. ♩ = 76 or slightly slower

170

p *pp* *mp* *pp*

pp *mp* *pp*

p *mp* *pp*

mp *pp*

nn

nn

nn

nn

170

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A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

189 *rit.* *p* *pp* *♩* = ca. 66

low and slow, low and slow: Now
chants, low and slow, low and slow: Now
low and slow: Now
chants, low and slow: Now

189

194 **O** *mp*

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now
this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

194 *pp* *p* *mp*

A Seed Marks Time
Chorus & Piano Reduction

200

p *pp* *pp*

Half the choir whispers; half continues singing

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now

200

p *pp*

205

Whispering

ppp *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this.

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this.

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this.

this. Now this. Now this. Now this. Now this.

205

ppp