

031.80

SHARA NOVA

The Last Light

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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The Last Light

from “Winter Hymns”

for SSA choir with divisi, piano, and viola

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 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 third movement as a stand-alone work, with the harp substituted for piano.

[031.80] “The Last Light” 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.

[031.70] “Owl Song” 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

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 staves of musical notation, each representing a different vocal range. The staves are labeled on the left as 'Soprano Solo', 'Soprano 1', 'Soprano 2', and 'Alto'. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notes are as follows:

- Soprano Solo:** A half note on B-flat (line 2), a quarter note on C (line 3), and a quarter note on D (line 4).
- Soprano 1:** A half note on B-flat (line 2), a quarter note on C (line 3), and a quarter note on D (line 4).
- Soprano 2:** A half note on B-flat (line 2), a quarter note on C (line 3), and a quarter note on D (line 4).
- Alto:** A half note on B-flat (line 2), a quarter note on C (line 3), and a quarter note on D (line 4).

Commissioned by iSing Silicon Valley, conducted by Jennah Delp.
Premiered December 2, 2023 at St. Mark's Episcopal Church featuring
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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

mf

S1

The last star,

mf

S2

The last star,

mf

A1

The last star,

mf

A2

The last star,

Relentlessly, ♩ = 148

Viola

metronomically, never slowing down

sim.

Piano

sempre p

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5

S1
ah, The

S2
ah, The

A1
ah, The

A2
ah, The

Vla.
ff *p*

Pno.
ff *pp*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score contains six staves. The top four staves are vocal parts for Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), Alto 1 (A1), and Alto 2 (A2). Each vocal part begins with a long note on the first measure, followed by a rest, and then a melodic line starting in the second measure. The vocal lines include triplets and are accompanied by lyrics: 'ah,' and 'The'. The fifth staff is for the Viola (Vla.), starting with a dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) and transitioning to *p* (piano) in the second measure. The bottom two staves are for the Piano (Pno.), featuring a complex rhythmic accompaniment with triplets in both the right and left hands, starting with a dynamic marking of *ff* and ending with *pp* (pianissimo).

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The musical score is arranged in a system with six staves. The vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) are in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 3/4 time signature. They all begin at measure 9. S1 and S2 sing "last star" in the first two measures, followed by a rest in the third measure, and then "light," in the fourth measure. A1 and A2 sing "last star" in the first two measures, followed by a rest in the third measure, and then "light," in the fourth measure. The Viola part (Vla.) is in alto clef with a key signature of one flat and a 3/4 time signature. It begins at measure 9 with a dynamic of *mf* and a marking "sappy, vibrant". It features a melodic line with triplets and accents. A dynamic change to *mp* occurs at measure 12. The Piano part (Pno.) is in grand staff with a key signature of one flat and a 3/4 time signature. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes with triplets in the right hand and rests in the left hand. A box labeled "A" is placed above the vocal parts at measure 12. A dynamic of *f* is indicated above the vocal parts at measure 12. A box labeled "A" is also placed above the Viola part at measure 12.

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The musical score is arranged in a system with six staves. The vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) are in soprano, alto, and tenor clefs, with lyrics "ah," appearing below the notes. The Viola part is in alto clef with dynamic markings *ff*, *p*, and *ff*. The Piano part is in grand staff with complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings *f* and *fff*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and triplets.

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B *mf*

S1 17 *mf*
The last star,

S2 *mf*
The last star,

A1 *mf*
The last star,

A2 *mf*
The last star,

B *p*

Vla. *p*

Pno. *ff* *pp*

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21

S1
ah,

S2
ah,

A1
ah,

A2
ah, The

Vla.
ff

Pno.
ff *mp*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, numbered 21, features five vocal staves (S1, S2, A1, A2) and two instrumental staves (Vla. and Pno.). The vocal parts are in treble clef with a common time signature. S1 and A2 have lyrics 'ah,' and 'The' respectively. S2 and A1 have lyrics 'ah,'. The Viola part is in alto clef with a common time signature and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The Piano part is in grand staff with a common time signature, featuring a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic in the first measure and a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic in the second measure. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and triplets.

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

S1 last star light,

S2 star light,

A1 star light,

A2 last star light,

Vla. **C** sweetly

Pno. *sim.*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score for 'The Last Light' features five vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) and a Viola (Vla.) part, with a Piano (Pno.) accompaniment. The score begins at measure 25. The vocal parts are in treble clef and sing the lyrics 'last star light,'. The vocal lines are marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic and feature long, sweeping melodic lines. A common time signature (**C**) is indicated above the vocal parts. The Viola part is in alto clef and features a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure, followed by a melodic line marked 'sweetly'. The Piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment with triplet markings. The dynamic marking *sim.* (simile) is placed at the bottom of the piano part.

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The musical score is arranged in a system with six staves. The vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) are in soprano, alto, and tenor clefs. The Viola part is in alto clef. The Piano part is in grand staff. The score begins at measure 29. The vocal parts feature long, sweeping melodic lines with trills and triplets. The Viola part has a melodic line with a *mp* dynamic. The Piano part features a complex texture with triplets and sixteenth-note patterns, ending with a *p* dynamic. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat sign.

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D

with quiet energy
mp

33
S1
To ap-pear

with quiet energy
mp

S2
To ap-pear

with quiet energy
mp

A1
To ap-pear

with quiet energy
mp

A2
To ap-pear

sul pont.
ghostly, with quiet energy

D

Vla.
pp

pedal ad. lib to expand the sound, but don't let it bleed too much.

Pno.
ppp **f**

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37 *mf*

S1 in the night sky, A - bove

S2 in the night sky, A - bove

A1 in the night sky, A - bove

A2 in the night sky,

Vla. *mf*

Pno.

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41 *f*

S1
the top of the trees, Shines

S2
the top of the trees, Shines

A1
the top of the trees, Shines

A2

Vla. *to ord.*

Pno. *no ped.*
p mp

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45

S1 *mf* **E** to tell

S2

A1 *mf* to tell

A2

Vla. *mp* **E** ord. gently sparkling tremolo

Pno. *mf* *pp* 8va

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48

S1
me,

S2
mf to tell me, *p* I have made

A1
me, *p* I have made

A2

Vla.
dying away
pp

Pno.
(8) *ppp*

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53

F
p

S1 I have made it the long way_____

S2 it the long way,_____ the long way_____

A1 it the long way,_____ the long_____ way,_____

A2 _____ the long_____ way,_____

F

Vla. _____

Pno. _____

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61

S1 *pp* **G** *n* **rit.**
home. _____

S2 *pp* *n*
home. _____

A1 *pp* *n*
mm. _____

A2 *pp* *n*
mm. _____

Vla. **G** *mp* *f* **rit.**

Pno.

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68

S1

S2

A1

A2

Vla.

Pno.

freely

3

3

3

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H
75 **a tempo**

S1

S2

A1 *mp*
The last

A2 *mp*
The last

H
a tempo

Vla.

Pno. *mf* *mp*

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78

f
light,

f
light,

f
light,

f
light,

ff 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

f 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Pno. 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

ff

The musical score for page 18 of "The Last Light" features six staves. The vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) are in treble clef and play a simple melody of three notes: a half note followed by two quarter notes, all marked *f* and "light,". The Viola part (Vla.) is in treble clef and plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth-note triplets, marked *ff*. The Piano part (Pno.) is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and features a complex accompaniment with eighth-note triplets in both hands, marked *f*. The page number 78 is written above the first staff.

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81

mf

S1

ah,

mf

S2

ah,

mf

A1

ah,

mf

A2

ah,

Vla.

f

Pno.

sim.

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85

I *f*

S1 Light,

S2 Light,

A1 Light,

A2 Light,

Vla. *mp* *pp* *mf* pizz.

Pno. *mf* *p*

mf

Detailed description: This page of a musical score for 'The Last Light' features six staves. The vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2) are in treble clef and sing the word 'Light,' with a long, sustained note. They are marked with a first ending bracket and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Viola part is in treble clef, playing a melodic line with dynamics of mezzo-piano (*mp*), pianissimo (*pp*), and mezzo-forte (*mf*), including a pizzicato (*pizz.*) section. The Piano part is in grand staff, featuring a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth-note triplets in both hands, with dynamics of mezzo-forte (*mf*) and piano (*p*).

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92 *p*

S1

S2

A1

A2

Vla. *p* arco

Pno.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, page 22, contains five systems of staves. The first four systems are vocal parts: 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 vocal parts feature long, sweeping melodic lines with slurs and a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The fifth system is for the Viola (Vla.), starting with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. It begins with a rest, followed by a section marked *p* and *arco*, containing a series of triplet eighth notes. The final system is for the Piano (Pno.), consisting of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand plays a continuous pattern of triplet eighth notes, while the left hand has rests.