

THIS WORLD IS NOT CONCLUSION

for SSAATTBB choir a cappella



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For Beth, my muse

Program Notes

DURATION: 4'

This World is not Conclusion.
 A Species stands beyond --
 Invisible, as Music --
 But positive, as Sound --
 It beckons, and it baffles --
 Philosophy -- don't know --
 And through a Riddle, at the last --
 Sagacity, must go --
 To guess it, puzzles scholars --
 To gain it, Men have borne
 Contempt of Generations
 And Crucifixion, shown --
 Faith slips -- and laughs, and rallies --
 Blushes, if any see --
 Plucks at a twig of Evidence --
 And asks a Vane, the way --
 Much Gesture, from the Pulpit --
 Strong Hallelujahs roll --
 Narcotics cannot still the Tooth
 That nibbles at the soul --

-Emily Dickinson
 (public domain)

With characteristic wit and opaqueness, Dickinson weaves her thoughts about the religious fervor of her time. At first glance, the poem seems a paean to the afterlife, to the great mysteries of heaven and the beyond. Further inspection reveals a subtle slight against religious answers to that great mystery. What is the narcotic that cannot still the nibbling tooth? Earthly fineries unable to quell a deeper spiritual longing? Or is it religion itself, unable with all its trappings and gestures to philosophically grasp the fundamental mystery of existence that gnaws away at each of us? Dickinson leaves the answer to the reader.

The rhymes and rhythms of Dickinson's poetry lend themselves well to musical setting. The stress patterns of her poems reflect an American balladry tradition stretching back to Old World folk songs. I therefore found the process of setting this poem in a modernist vein to be intriguing, in that I was consciously *avoiding* creating a ballad-like setting. My rhythms are stretched and pulled, words reshuffled and redacted into recurrent patterns and motives. Phrases and melodies are tossed about among the eight voices in an interplay of constant motion. Even with all this manipulation, a lyricism arises from Dickinson's words, as if lying there awaiting a composer to write them down. I am indebted to her genius for language that makes setting her words a challenge and a joy.

A Note to the Conductor

Given that Dickinson was an American poet and I an American composer, the words in this setting should be pronounced as in American English, even where the harsh nasalness of our tongue might seem ill-fitting. Also, given the nature of the work, precise enunciation of syllables is a *must*.

Thank you for your performance, and best of luck.

Sincerely,

Marc LeMay

This World is not Conclusion

text by Emily Dickinson
for SSAATTBB choir a cappella

Marc LeMay
(b.1982)
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Tentative, Uncertain

♩ = 60

I Soprano

II Soprano

I Alto

II Alto

I Tenor
mp This World is not Con - clu - sion, Con - clu - sion, a *sf*

II Tenor
mp This World is not Con - clu - sion, Con - clu - sion, a *sf*

Baritone
mp This World is not Con - clu - sion, a *sf*

Bass
mp This World is not Con - clu - sion, a *sf*

A Mysteriously

5

mp

S.I. In - vi - si - ble, as

S.II

A.I. *mp* In - vi - si -

A.II *mp* In - vi -

f

T.I. Spe-cies stands be - yond._____

T.II *f* Spe-cies stands be - yond._____

Bar. *f* Spe-cies stands be - yond._____

Bs. *f* Spe-cies stands be - yond._____

9

S.I. *f* Mu - sic, as MU - sic, But po - si - tive, as Sound...

S.II *mp* In - vi - si - ble, as Mu - sic But *f* po - si - tive, as Sound...

A.I ble, as Mu - sic, as MU - sic, But *f* po - si - tive, as Sound...

A.II - si - ble, as Mu - sic, But *f* po - si - tive, as Sound...

T.I

T.II

Bar.

Bs.

B With gusto, with contained frustration

♩ = 100

14

S.I. *mf*
ga - ga-ga-ga go - go-go-go go-go - go - go go-go ga-ga

S.II *mf*
ga - ga-ga-ga go - go-go-go go-go - go - go go-go ga-ga

A.I *mf*
bec - kons

A.II *mf*
bec - kons

* This syllable should be sung with an American short "a", as in the "ga" in "sagacity"

T.I *f*
It bec kons, and it baf-fles, Phi - lo - so-phy don't know, And

T.II *f*
It bec kons, and it baf-fles, Phi - lo - so-phy don't know, And

Bar. *f*
It bec kons, and it baf-fles, Phi - lo - so-phy don't know, And

Bs. *mf*
go go go go go go go go

19

S.I. *mf*
ga - ga ga-ga at the last *mf* gaga-gaga-ga

S.II *mf*
ga - ga ga-ga at the last *mf* gaga-gaga-ga

A.I *mf* *mp*
Rid - dle Sa ga

A.II *mf* *f*
Rid - dle Sa - ga - ci-ty

T.I *f* *p*
through a, through a Rid-dle Sa - ga Sa - ga

T.II *p* *f*
through a, through a Rid-dle Sa - ga - - ci-ty

Bar. *mp* *f* *mf*
through a, through a Rid-dle Sa ga Sa

Bs. *mf* *f*
go go go go Sa - ga

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a SATB choir, page 5, starting at measure 19. The score is written for Soprano I (S.I.), Soprano II (S.II), Alto I (A.I), Alto II (A.II), Tenor I (T.I), Tenor II (T.II), Baritone (Bar.), and Bass (Bs.). The lyrics are: "ga - ga ga-ga at the last gaga-gaga-ga", "Rid - dle Sa ga", "through a, through a Rid-dle Sa - ga Sa - ga", "through a, through a Rid-dle Sa - ga - - ci-ty", "through a, through a Rid-dle Sa ga Sa", and "go go go go Sa - ga". Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), and *p* (piano). The score features various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and accents.

25

f *f* *ff* *f*

S.I. ga - ga - ga ga - ga Sa - ga - ci - ty, must go. To

S.II Sa - ga - ci - ty Sa - ga - ci - ty, must go. To

A.I. Sa - ga - ci - ty, must go. To

A.II Sa - ga - - - ci - ty, must go. To

T.I. Sa - ga - - - ci - ty, must go, go.

T.II Sa - ga - ci - ty Sa - ga - ci - ty, must go, go.

Bar. ga Sa - ga - - - ci - ty, must go, go.

Bs. Sa - ga Sa - ga - ci - ty, must go, go.

C

31

S.I.
guess it, puz-zles scho - lars, To gain it, Men have borne Con -

S.II
guess it, puz-zles scho - lars, To gain it, Men have borne Con -

A.I
guess it, puz-zles scho - lars, To gain it, Men have borne Con -

A.II
guess it, puz-zles scho - lars, To gain it, Men have borne Con -

mf
T.I
Cru - ci Cru - ci Cru - ci - fix - ion Cru - ci - fic - fic - fic - fic - fix - ion

mf
T.II
Cru - ci Cru - ci Cru - ci - fix - ion Cru - ci - fic - fic - fic - fic - fix - ion

mf
Bar.
Cru - ci Cru - ci Cru - ci - fix - ion Cru - ci - fic - fic - fic - fic - fix - ion

mf
Bs.
Gen - er - a - tions Gen - er - a - tions

40 *f*

S.I.
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

S.II
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

A.I
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

A.II
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

T.I
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

T.II
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

Bar.
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

Bs.
Cru-ci- fix - ion Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic-fic fic-fic-fic - fic - fic-fic-fix - ion, shown. *ff*

D Slower, Somewhat Mockingly

♩ = 80

46

S.I. *mp* < *mf* Blush - es,
 S.II *mp* < *mf* Blush - es,
 A.I *mp* Faith slips, and laughs, and ral - lies, and ral - lies, *mf* Blush - es, if a - ny
 A.II *mp* Faith slips, and laughs, and ral - lies, ral - lies, *mf* Blush - es, if a - ny
 T.I *mp* < *mf* Blush - es,
 T.II *mp* Faith slips, and laughs, and ral - lies, and ral - lies, *mf* Blush - es, if a - ny
 Bar. *mp* Faith slips, and laughs, and ral - lies, ral - lies, *mf* Blush - es, if a - ny
 Bs. *mp* < *mf* Blush - es,

More Mockingly

52

mp

S.I. Plucks at a twig of E - vidence of

mp

S.II Plucks at a twig of E - vidence of

p *pp*

A.I see. ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha-ha-ha Hal-le Hal-le ha - ha

p *pp*

A.II see. ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha-ha-ha Hal-le Hal-le ha - ha

mp

T.I Plucks at a twig of E - vidence of

p *pp*

T.II see. ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha-ha-ha Hal-le Hal-le ha - ha

p *pp*

Bar. see. ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha ha-ha-ha-ha Hal-le Hal-le ha - ha

mp

Bs. Plucks at a twig of E - vidence of

rit.

E

Slower, Tentative and Uncertain

♩ = 60

56

f *p*
 S.I. E - vi - dence of E - vi - dence And asks a
f *p*
 S.II E - vi - dence of E - vi - dence And
p
 A.I haha Hal - le Hal le - lu jah And asks a Vane, the way
p
 A.II haha Hal - le Hal le - lu jah And asks a Vane, the way
f *p*
 T.I E - vi - dence of E - vi - dence And asks a Vane, the way
 T.II haha Hal - le Hal le - lu jah
 Bar. haha Hal - le Hal le - lu jah
f
 Bs. E - vi - dence of E - vi - dence

64

S.I. _____

S.II _____

A.I. way _____ the way _____

A.II. Vane, the way _____ the way _____

T.I. _____ the way _____

T.II. _____ a Vane, the way _____

Bar. _____ the way _____ the way _____

Bs. way _____ the way _____

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a SATB choir and piano accompaniment. The score is divided into five systems. The first system contains the Soprano I (S.I.) and Soprano II (S.II) parts, which are currently blank. The second system contains the Alto I (A.I.) and Alto II (A.II.) parts. A.I. has lyrics 'way', 'the', and 'way'. A.II. has lyrics 'Vane, the way' and 'the way'. The third system contains the Tenor I (T.I.) and Tenor II (T.II.) parts. T.I. has lyrics 'the way'. T.II. has lyrics 'a Vane, the way'. The fourth system contains the Bass (Bar.) and Bass Solo (Bs.) parts. Bar. has lyrics 'the way' and 'the way'. Bs. has lyrics 'way', 'the way'. The piano accompaniment is indicated by trapezoidal symbols in the right margin of the vocal staves. The music features various note values, including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and slurs. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 8/8.

F

molto rubato, accel. a - - - - - Fast, Like a Furious Clock

15

♩ = 145

69

S.I.
 S.II
 A.I
 A.II
 T.I
 T.II
 Bar.
 Bs.

p *cresc. poco a poco*
p *cresc. poco a poco*

Much Ges- ture, from the Pul- pit Hal - le Ges- ture, from the

Musical score for vocal and piano parts, measures 69-74. The score is in 4/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent changes to 2/4, 3/4, and 3/4 time signatures. The vocal parts (S.I, S.II, A.I, A.II, T.I, T.II, Bar., Bs.) are marked with a forte dynamic (*f*) and a tempo of 145 beats per minute. The piano parts (Bar., Bs.) are marked with a piano dynamic (*p*) and a crescendo (*cresc. poco a poco*). The lyrics are: "Much Ges- ture, from the Pul- pit Hal - le Ges- ture, from the".

75

S.I.

S.II

A.I

A.II

T.I

T.II

Bar.

Bs.

p cresc. poco a poco

Much Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Hal -

Hal - le - lu - jah le - lu - jah Hal - le -

Pul - pit Hal - le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit lu -

Pul - pit lu - jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Hal -

79

S.I.

p cresc. poco a poco

S.II Go-go Go - go Go-go Cru-ci - fic Po - si - tive Cru-ci - fic - fic

A.I le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit lu -

p cresc. poco a poco

A.II Po - si - tive E - vi - dence Po - si - tive go Cru - ci Cru-ci

p cresc. poco a poco

T.I Go-go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go

T.II lu - jah lu - jah Hal - le - le - lu - jah

Bar. jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Hal -

Bs. le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit lu -

mf cresc. poco a poco

82

S.I.
Much Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Hal -

S.II
Go-go Go - go Go-go Cru-ci - fic Po - si - tive Cru - ci - fic - fic

A.I
jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Hal -

A.II
Po - si - tive E - vi - dence Po - si - tive go Cru - ci Cru-ci

T.I
Go-go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go

T.II
Hal - le - lu - jah le - lu - jah Hal - le

Bar.
le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit lu -

Bs.
jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Hal -

85

S.I.
le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit lu -

S.II
Go-go Go - go Go-go Cru - ci - fic Po - si - tive Cru - ci - fic - fic

A.I
le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit lu -

A.II
Po - si - tive E - vi - dence Po - si - tive go Cru - ci Cru - ci

T.I
Go-go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go

T.II
lu - jah lu - jah Hal - le - le - lu - jah

Bar.
jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Hal -

Bs.
le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit lu -

88

S.I. jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Strong

S.II Go-go Go - go Go-go Cru-ci - fic Po - si - tive Cru - ci - fic - fic

A.I. jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Strong

A.II Po - si - tive E - vi - dence Po - si - tive go Cru - ci Cru - ci

T.I. Go-go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go-go Go-go - go Go-go Go

T.II Hal - le - lu - jah le - lu - jah Hal - le

Bar. le Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Strong

Bs. jah Ges - ture, from the Pul - pit Strong

G With Increasing Intensity

91 *f cresc. poco a poco*

S.I.
Ha-la-la-le, Ha-la - la-le - le-lu-jah Ha-la-la-le, Ha-la-

S.II
f cresc. poco a poco
Ha-la-la-le, la-le le-lu-jah-lu-jah Ha-la-la-le, la-le

A.I
f cresc. poco a poco
Cru-ci Cru-ci-fix - ion go E-videncego Cru-ci Cru-ci-fix - ion

A.II
f cresc. poco a poco
Hal - le - lu Hal - le - lu - jah Hal - le - lu Hal -

T.I
f cresc. poco a poco
Cru - ci Cru - ci-fic Cru-ci-fix-ion Cru - ci Cru - ci-fic

T.II
f cresc. poco a poco
Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic Cru-ci-go-go-go Cru-ci-fic-fic Cru-ci-fic

Bar.
f cresc. poco a poco
Ha-la-la-le, la-le le-lu-jah lu-jah Ha-la-la-le, la-le

Bs.
f cresc. poco a poco
Ha-la-la-le, Ha-la - la-le - le-lu-jah Ha-la-la-le, Ha-la-

94

S.I.
la - le - le - lu - jah Ha - la - la - le, Ha - la -

S.II
— le - lu - jah - lu - jah Ha - la - la - le, la - le—

A.I
go E - vi - dence go Cru - ci Cru - ci - fix - ion

A.II
le - lu - jah Hal - le - lu Hal -

T.I
— Cru - ci - fix - ion Cru - ci Cru - ci - fic—

T.II
Cru - ci - go - go - go Cru - ci - fic - fic Cru - ci - fic

Bar.
— le - lu - jah lu - jah Ha - la - la - le, la - le—

Bs.
la - le - le - lu - jah Ha - la - la - le, Ha - la -

96

S.I.
la - le - le - lu - jah Hal - le - le - lu - jah Hal - le - le - lu - jah

S.II
— le - lu - jah - lu - jah Hal - le - lu - jah - lu - jah Hal - le - lu - jah - lu - jah

A.I
go E - vi - dence go go E - vi - dence go go E - vi - dence go

A.II
le - lu - jah Hal - le - lu Hal - le - lu

T.I
— Cru - ci - fix - ion Cru - ci - fix - ion Cru - ci - fix - ion

T.II
Cru - ci - go - go - go Cru - ci - go - go - go Cru - ci - go - go - go

Bar.
— le - lu - jah lu - jah Hal - le - lu - jah lu - jah Hal - le - lu - jah lu - jah

Bs.
la - le - le - lu - jah Hal - le - le - lu - jah Hal - le - le - lu - jah

H Much passion

99 *ff*

S.I. Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le,

S.II *ff* E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

A.I *ff* Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le,

A.II *ff* E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

ff alla percussion

T.I Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch

T.II *ff* Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le,

Bar. *ff* E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

Bs. *ff* This _____ World _____

102

S.I. Hal - le, le - lu Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu

S.II E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

A.I Hal - le, le - lu Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu

A.II E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

T.I Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch

T.II Hal - le, le - lu Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu

Bar. E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

Bs.

is _____

105

S.I. Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le,

S.II E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vid - ecne E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

A.I Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le,

A.II E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vid - ecne E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

T.I Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch

T.II Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le,

Bar. E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vi - dence E - vid - ecne E - vi - dence E - vi - dence

Bs. not _____ Con - clu - -

108

S.I
Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

S.II
E - vi - dence E - vi - dence Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

A.I
Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

A.II
E - vi - dence E - vi - dence Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

T.I
Mu - ch Mu - ch Mu - ch Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

T.II
Hal - le, le - lu - jah Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

Bar.
E - vi - dence E - vi - dence Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

Bs.
- - sion Ha - la - le, Hal - le, le - lu - jah

molto rit. - - - - ♩ = 65

28

fff

111

S.I. *mf* lu jah Nar-

S.II *fff* *mf* lu jah Nar-

A.I *fff* lu jah

A.II *fff* lu jah

T.I *fff* lu - jahs jahs roll

T.II *fff* lu - jahs jahs roll

Bar. *fff* *mp* lu - jahs jahs roll

Bs. *fff* *mp* lu - jahs jahs roll

I**Sweetly, Mysterious**

117

S.I.
co - tics Nar - co - tics can - not still the Tooth

S.II
co - tics Nar - co - tics can - not still the Tooth, the

A.I
mp
kah

A.II
mp
kah

T.I
mp
kah Tooth

T.II
mp
kah Tooth

Bar.
kah Tooth

Bs.
kah Tooth

