

A COMMUNION OF SAINTS

Eight Songs for Voice and Piano

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COMPOSER'S NOTE

A COMMUNION OF SAINTS was begun during residencies at the Hambidge Center, Rabun Gap, Georgia, and The Helene Wurlitzer Foundation of New Mexico, Taos, New Mexico, in May and June, 1995, and completed in State College, Pennsylvania in April and May, 1996.

The song cycle was composed for and is dedicated to Suzanne Roy and Steven Smith.

1. Saints

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Sarabande $\text{♩} = 69$ *mp* *sempre legato*

Voice

Piano

They are of us

p
con pedale

simile

and come from us

cresc.

then go through us

cresc.

just to show us all we

mf

7

mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 6 and 7. The vocal line starts with a whole note 'just' in measure 6 and a half note 'to' in measure 7. The piano accompaniment features a continuous eighth-note pattern in both hands. Measure 7 is marked with a box containing the number 7 and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic.

know as the hard world of

9

Detailed description: This system contains measures 8 and 9. The vocal line has a half note 'know' in measure 8 and a half note 'as' in measure 9. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern. Measure 9 is marked with a box containing the number 9.

sheer fact is too apt

dim.

11

dim.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 10 and 11. The vocal line has a half note 'sheer' in measure 10 and a half note 'fact' in measure 11. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern. Measure 11 is marked with a box containing the number 11. A *dim.* (diminuendo) marking appears above the vocal line in measure 10 and below the piano accompaniment in measure 11.

mp

to be shat - tered by

13

mp

mf

love.

15

17

poco rit.

p *mp* *pp*

2. The Shepherd's Tale

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Barcarolle $\text{♩} = 144$

mp

Voice

How rude - ly sta - bled birth'd ye, babe, With moan - ing cow and

Piano

sempre legato

mf *mp*

con pedale

ox - en, That no - one wait - ed news of ye Save lambs who leapt in frolic And the

moth - er's hus - band hard with care Of doubt in what lay sleep - ing? That

5 10

poco rit. mf a tempo

mis' - ra - ble and storm - ing night Not once gave pause to thun - der. No stars ran off their

14 *poco rit. a tempo mf*

froz - en track To spy up - on your la - bor. But

17

all tongues wag a - bout your birth And each adds a new won - der.

20

dim. poco rit.

all tongues wag a - bout your birth And each adds a new won - der.

24 *poco rit. dim.*

a tempo

p Now talk - ing don - keys prais - ing God Are claimed to have at - tend - ed,___

28 *a tempo**poco cresc.*

And through the course of rooms and bars Your mag - ic birth gets mend - ed,___ *p* Em -

32 *poco cresc.**cresc. poco a poco*

bel - lished in the tell - ing o - ver Spic - y wine and

36 *p cresc. poco a poco*

was - sails. The Beth - lem crowd en - joyed the tales Of

39

poco rit. f a tempo

coun - try bump - kin Da - vids And se - cret sa - viours

42

born in sties By mo - ther made a vir - gin. It's

45

all laughed off as this year's ruse, A Na - za - re - an ru - mor. It's

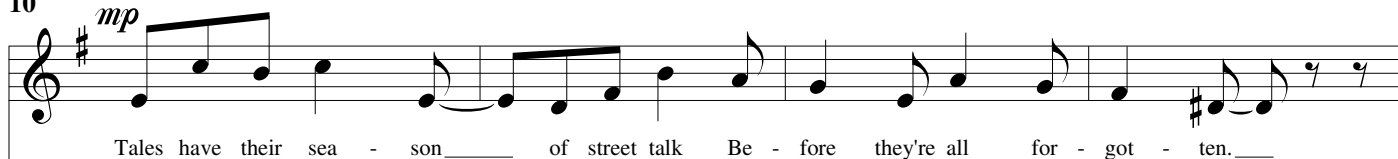
48

sonore

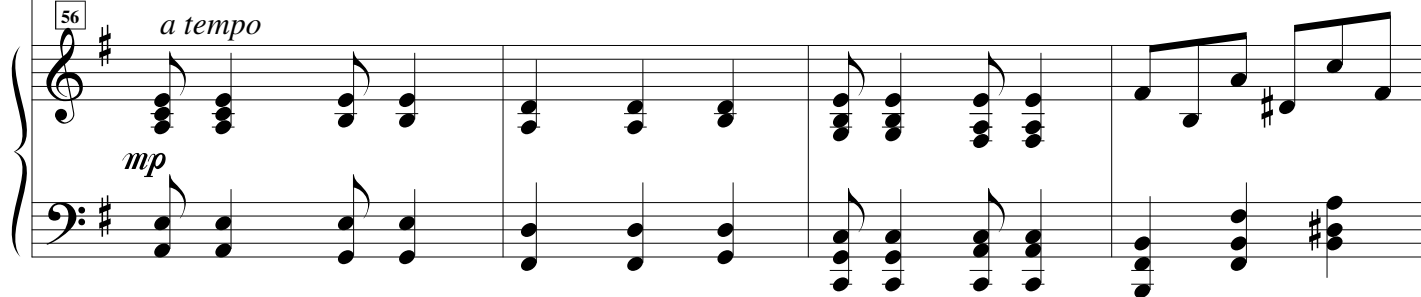
all laughed off as this year's ruse, A Na - za - re - an ru - mor.

52

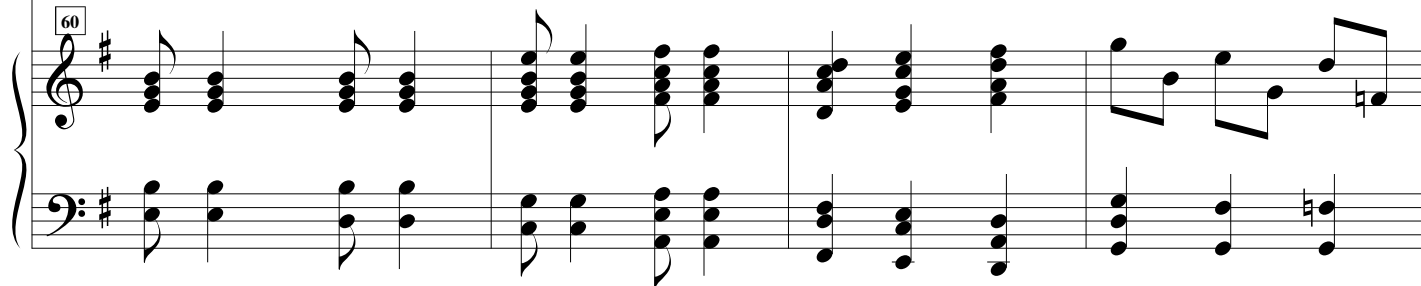
poco rit. dim.

mp

56

a tempo

60



64



68



f a tempo

No sa - viour ev - er slept with kine or found a fa - ther

70 *a tempo*

f

want - ing. ____ T'were bet - ter born a shep - herd than A

73

rid - dle in a barn - yard. ____ T'were bet - ter born a

76

shep - herd than A rid - dle ____ in a barn - yard. ____

79 *rit. e dim.*

rit. e dim.

p

I'd side with them. It makes no sense To talk of prom - ised com - ets___

82 *meno mosso*

pp

a tempo

Or won - ders of a thous - and nights Be - fall - ing all up - on us___ To

86 *a tempo*

mp

intensely

mf

take the pun - ish - ment we mete With God's own of - fered in - fant. ___ One

90

cresc.

night to wipe out all our debt. I'd side with them, ___ ex - cept

94

cresc.

allarg.

f *expansively*

I saw my sheep bolt down the hill A - fraid of sud - den

96

f

thun - der, And heard the song the thun - der sang In a

99

ff

piu f

sky gone live with an - gels. And heard the song the

102

mf

mp *molto allargando*

thun - der sang In a sky gone live with an - gels.

105

mp *p* *pp*

3. Mary Magdalene Remembers Ascension Sunday

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Always pressing ahead $\text{♩} = 100$

Voice

p

Clouds tossed a - round like grave - clothes _____ That morn - ing,

gracefully *simile*

Piano

p

con pedale

cresc. poco a poco

spring mud held our foot - ing Where our an - kles

cresc. poco a poco

f **Jazz waltz** $\text{♩} = 132$

sank. He laughed, he laughed Light - er than life, taught us

f

dance Bare - ly touch - ing the tips of grass. _____

f

exuberantly

Light - er than life, taught us dance _____

21

rit. e dim. al fine *mf*

Light - er than life,

25

rit. e dim. al fine *mf*

mp

taught us dance _____ Bare - ly touch - ing the tips of

30

mp

grass.

35

p *l. h.* *pp*

4. Francis of Assisi Relates a Strange Tale

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Recitative

Voice

f espressively *mp*

A wolf lives in my house. He came one night to make me his meal.

Piano

f *mp*

mf *mp*

And I pit-ied his hun-ger and fed him my heart.

Jazz waltz ♩ = 138

mf mp legato

I let him sup

9 always very rhythmic

mf dim. p

con pedale

cresc.

15

upon my sin - ew and bone. Till, sa - ted on my

cresc.

mf

21

flesh, he slept Qui - et

mf

dim.

dim.

Recitative

mf

26

at my feet. Poor rash crea - ture,

rit.

p

mf

***f* Tempo primo**

who dare call you cruel? _____ God's lit - tle work - man

31

f *mf*

chew - ing at our bone, leav - ing us noth - ing to call our own. _____

35

You grant us per - fect pov - er - ty. _____

40

mf *mp* *dim.* *allargando*

Now set - tle down to share my noth - ing, _____ my all, _____

45

p *freely* *ten.* *a tempo* *cresc.*

50 *sonore*
mf *f*

my pet, my bod - y, my
54 *con forza* *p*

allargando *p ten.*
an - guish, my tempt - er, my
58 *allargando*

Calmly $\text{♩} = 76$

peace.
62 *p* *pp*

5. A Couple of Saints

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Jaunty $\text{♩} = 104$

Voice

mf Ben - e - dic - tus,

Piano

p cresc. *mf* *mp*

cresc. *subito p*

non - de - script and non - de - scrip - tive, grew vin - dic - tive: "Why should saint - hood

cresc. *subito p*

mp cresc. *f*

try to taint good blood? _____ That ain't what saints should be. _____

cresc. *f*

mf

Ho - ly pris - sy sis - sies whose vast bliss - es blast them

12

subito p cresc.

like U - lys - ses' hu - bris, whose en - su - ing pen - ance went as

16

subito p cresc.

f

far as Tim - buc - tu and Ith - a - ca. — Though myth - i - cal, he

20

rit. *a tempo*

f

dim.

par - a - digms the pith - y Pa they praise as Fa - ther, crazed ma - raud - er,

24

dim.

get - ting kit - ten fits in heav - en.

28

rit. e dim.

p Why can't we be pa - gan - ly and take a break from sanc - ti - ty? _____

a tempo

33

p *mp*

mf

Why can't we be pa-gan-ly and take a break from sanc-ti-ty?

37 *mf* *mp* *rall.*

Andante maestoso *p*

Bless-ed Sim-pli-cius kept to a

42 *dim.* *p*

mp *mp*

hol-low and prayed. At night

47 *mp*

p *ppp*

whip-poor-will were his pil-low.

51 *p* *fade*

6. Saint Jerome Considers His Decorum

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Droll, whimsical $\text{♩} = 92$

Voice

Piano

mf

p

mp

mf

You can't boil wa - ter in your moth - er's ten - nis shoes. You

sempre legato

can't cook the kit - ty in the toast - er.

mf

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

You can't eat the chair or__ stick the mat-tress__ up your nose._____

8 *mp* *cresc.* *f* *sonore*

p

It's hard_____ not to do_____ what you ain't_____ sup -

11 *p*

mp

posed ter._____

13 *mp* *ritardando* *p* *slow arpeg.* *Oo*

7. Saint Teresa Recites a Litany for the Feast of the Assumption

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Allegro ♩ = 132 *mf*

Voice

O Ma - ry! My

Piano

mf *simile* *con pedale*

Ma - ry, dear moth - er of God, _____ O

Ma - ry of blue as the sky with - out cloud, _____ O

4 7

mp

Ma - ry of tears in a dark - room, O

11

Ma - ry slaught - ered by the an - gel, O

15

mp

p murmured

Ma - ry torn a - way by words, O Ma - ry,

20

p

bless - ed fruit - ed womb. Ma - ry with a sword in your bel - ly.

25

Ma - ry nec - es - sar - y sac - ri - fice. _____ Your girl - hood _____

30

turned ma - ter - nal for a mys - ter -

35

f dim.

mf dim.

y. _____ O Ma - ry, my Ma - ry, I do not come to

40

molto rit. mp *a tempo*

mp

pray (my own soul in the keep - ing _____ of St. Jude) in this

45

p cresc.

half - light of can - dles I fear the flick - ers of your al - a - bas - ter

50 *p cresc.* *f*

blood up - on the ser - pent's head.

55 *con forza* *cresc.* *mf*

Were you ev - er seen in laugh - ter, —

59 *ff* *mf*

my — sad Ma - ry?

64

cresc.

Or did the shad - ow _____ of the im - pon - d'ra - ble stretch o - ver

69

cresc.

f, *mf* warmly

e - ven in - fant joys? I like to think of

74

f *mp leggiero*

sun - ny days in what is less a des - ert _____

79

p cresc.

than a prom - ise be - fore want _____ gets gift, where

84

mf

cresc. *allarg.* *f* *a tempo*

dust is _____ roam - ing farm - land _____ and ev' - ry

89

cresc. *f* *mf*

dim. *molto rit.*

child a king of what is - n't

94

molto rit. *dim.*

mp **Calmly** ♩ = 72

yet. _____ There on the cusp of his - to - ry you would

99

mp

p

search the fields for flow - ers _____ like a cra - zy

104

p *delicately*

ot - ter bal - anc-ing the sun on your nose

109

and ev' - ry-thing else hangs o - ver the

114

edge of a cliff that holds

119

allarg.

all the past.

123

a tempo

rit. and fade

8. Saint Agatha's Last Prayer

Jason Charnesky

Bruce Trinkley

Andante espressivo $\text{♩} = 66-72$

Voice

p *3* Give me your face O be my mem - o - ry

Piano

pp *sonore*

mp

Hold me here _____ a - gain When I am

5 *mp* *p* *cantando*

p

gone Your eyes see me Hear noth - ing else _____ I die, _____

10 *mp* *p*

so do we all. But you O be me in

you Move to me O stay! O make us,

make us love In - ter - mi - na - bly.

mp *cresc.* *mf* *mp* *mf* *dim.* *poco rit. p* *a tempo* *dim.* *p* *pp* *ppp* *pppp*