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## Light the Way: Song Cycle for Baritone Voice and Piano (Honors)

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# LIGHT THE WAY

SONG CYCLE FOR BARITONE VOICE AND PIANO

MUSIC BY BRIAN BAXTER  
TEXT BY JOSHUA ZIEMANN



# LIGHT THE WAY

## SONG CYCLE FOR BARITONE VOICE AND PIANO

2005-2006

DURATION: APPROX. 15 MINUTES

MUSIC BY BRIAN BAXTER  
TEXT BY JOSHUA ZIEMANN

COMPOSER'S NOTE: *Light the Way* is based on seven distinct poems written by Joshua Ziemann. I was compelled to write a song cycle based on Ziemann's texts after reading through his poetry and seeing great possibilities for musical settings. The poems that I chose to set are not concretely related to one another; however they are related on an abstract level. The texts in many respects, represents a sense of searching for purpose and meaning in life and our environment. I chose the title, *Light the Way*, in order to reflect this sentiment.

Each song is relatively brief and written to be performed in the order they are presented here. Only *To Martyr*, *Missile Life*, *Chaos Bush*, and "(a riddle)" can be performed outside the context of the cycle. The entire cycle is based around 4 key centers; D, E, F, G#. The key centers for each song respectively adhere to the following pattern: D, F, E, G#, E, F, and D. The songs are arranged in the manner of a palindrome. The central song, *a wolfpack thundered in and tore me lengthwise*, features text that is arranged as a palindrome and the music in this song in many ways reflects this quality. The central 3 songs are also connected with no pause between them.

The opening 3 songs of the cycle begin with questions regarding the value of time and energy involved in following one's passion. These songs lead to the central song; *a wolfpack thundered in and tore me lengthwise*, which in a way represents a very strong and life-altering experience. It depicts the violence of a metaphorical wolfpack destroying everything that the writer represents (or a literal wolfpack depending on your interpretation). The final 3 songs of the cycle represent a response to the first three songs due to the stunning experience with the *wolfpack*. *Your could would* represents hope for the future, *Chaos Bush*, simply admires the union of nature and the industry of man, and "(a riddle)" seeks to define what it is that lights the way for personal inspiration. One could take this poem as a literal riddle defining a lighthouse however in the context of this song cycle it represents the search for more in this life and beyond it. The lighthouse is the riddle that we as humans are striving to define and understand.

-BTB



## TEXTS:

### TO MARTYR

Each unlit day I raise the pen  
And hope grasps for the ledge again  
For why, if man holds not my faith  
Would I waste ink on offing's wraith?  
Because, truth told, my loss is dire;  
But they've less hope and stakes are higher.

### MISSILE LIFE

Most will sight the desert sand  
Fewer strive for sky  
All are thrust with even hand  
Though some are loathe to fly

### IF I PEELED EVERY BIRDIE, FLUNG

If I peeled every birdie, flung  
them to the skies to watch –  
their arc would be Uneducate  
and Poetry would retch

### A WOLFPACK THUNDERED IN AND TORE ME LENGTHWISE

a wolfpack thundered in and tore me lengthwise  
venting my chest as it howled  
over a quivering fist

I shot it and it quivered and howled more

venting blood across my chest  
as it howled and kept venting a  
wolfpack thundered in and tore me lengthwise

## YOUR COULD WOULD

your could would  
crush these indecencies  
stir them in sparkle lime luster  
and drink to a whole  
new

your would  
(if only a sweet brevity,  
stir in grain your laughter  
to

## CHAOS BUSH

A tempestuous bough  
in glorious  
yoke Bloom  
protruded split twigs  
between rusty links  
and then twisted them  
into a fine handshake.

## "(RIDDLE)"

Though scion am I of great trees  
I sway not with a level breeze  
Nor do I bud nor green or rise  
A totem, bared; attentive guise  
I plow the darkness, reigns in hand  
of all your world; I light the land

-JZ



# To Martyr

Music by Brian Baxter  
(b. 1985)

Text by Joshua Ziemann  
(b. 1986)

Mysterioso  $\text{♩} = c. 88$

Baritone

Piano

*ff*

*p*

*f*

*ff*

*mp*

*ff*

*mf*

*ff*

*mp*

3 a tempo

5 a tempo

8vb

6

Red

\*Harmonics: Diamond-shaped noteheads indicate that those keys should be depressed silently and no pedal should be used.



## 7 Questioning ♩ = 60

7 Questioning  $\text{♩} = 60$

*mp*

*gub*

16 *mf*

Each \_\_\_\_\_ un - lit day I raise \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

20

— the pen — and — hope grasps

*mf*

This musical score is for a piano accompaniment. It features a vocal line at the top and a piano accompaniment below. The vocal line has lyrics: "— the pen — and — hope grasps". The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand part (treble clef) and a left-hand part (bass clef). The right-hand part has a melody with various chords and intervals, including a prominent trill in the first measure. The left-hand part provides a harmonic foundation with chords and moving lines. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score is written on a single page with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C).



24

for the ledge — a - gain and — hope grasps —

*ff* *sub. mp*

*f* *f*

Sea — ...

28

— for the ledge a - gain

*p* *pp* *n* *ff*

Fast and Violent ♩ = 144

...

34

...

40

For why, for why, if man holds

*f*

8vb



44

*mf* *ff**mf*

not my faith my — faith my faith

*(8<sup>th</sup>)* *Reo.*

47

*f**mp*

would I would I

*sub. p* *Reo.*

51

*mf**ff**a tempo*

waste ink — on off — — ing's wraith?

*mf* *f* *ff*

55

*Reo.*



59

Sparse  $\text{♩} = 72$ 

accel.  
(8va)

64

Brooding  $\text{♩} = 72$ 

68

accel.

rit.

71

75

Confidently  $\text{♩} = 60$ 

mp

Be - cause truth - told



80

*mf* *f*

my loss \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_ loss \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ dire

*mf* *f*

8vb

85

*f*

but they've less hope and \_\_\_\_\_ stakes

*sub. mp* *f*

88

*p*

are high - er \_\_\_\_\_



*f*

they've — less hope — and — stakes are

*mf* *f*

93

high - er — high - er.

*ff* *ff* *fff*

3-4" 6-8" 3-4" 6-8"

15<sup>mb</sup>



# Missile Life

Music by Brian Baxter

(b. 1985)

Text by Joshua Ziemann

(b. 1986)

Driving  $\text{♩} = 112$

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It begins with a piano introduction in 3/4 time, marked 'Driving' with a tempo of 112 beats per minute. The piano part features a driving bass line with eighth notes and chords, and a treble part with chords and some melodic lines. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score then transitions to a vocal entry at measure 8, marked 'a tempo' with a tempo of 112. The vocal line is in 3/4 time and includes the lyrics: 'Most will sight'. The piano accompaniment continues with a driving bass line and chords. Dynamics include *f*, *mf*, and *sub.p* (sub-piano). The score continues with the vocal line singing 'the de - sert sand' and the piano accompaniment providing a driving bass line and chords. Dynamics include *mf*, *p* (piano), and *<f* (pianissimo). The score ends at measure 12.

5

8

12

*f*

*mf*

*a tempo*  $\text{♩} = 112$

Most will sight

*f*

*sub.p*

*mf*

*p*

*<f*

the de - sert sand



15 *mf*

Few - er strive

*ff* *p* *f* *p*

19

for — sky —

*f*

24

*sub.p* *mp*

28

All are — thrust —

*p* *f*



31 *p* *rit.*  $\text{♩} = 72$  *mp*  $\text{♩} = 112$  *f*

— with ev - en hand Though some

35 *pp* *p* *mp* *mf* *ff*

are — loathe —

39 *f* *ff* *mf* *f* *mf*

to — fly  
8<sup>va</sup>



# If I peeled every birdie, flung

Music by Brian Baxter

(b. 1985)

Text by Joshua Ziemann

(b. 1986)

Quickly ♩ = 84

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Quickly' and a quarter note equal to 84 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplet markings. The vocal line enters in the second system with the lyrics 'If I peeled every birdie, flung'. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *mf*, *p*, *f*, *ff*, *mp*, *sub.p*, and *f*. There are also performance instructions like 'Gliss.' and 'Ped.' (pedal). The score is divided into systems, with measures 3, 6, and 8 marked at the beginning of their respective systems. The piece concludes with a final chord in the piano part.

*mf* *p* *mf*

*f* *ff* *mp*

a tempo ♩ = 84

*mf* *f* *ff*

If I peeled ev - ery bir - die, flung

*p* *f*

*ff* *mf*

them to — the skies — to watch

*sub.p* *f* *mf* *mp*

Ped.



14 *p*

*f*

their arc would be

*mf*

3 3 6 6 6 6

16

*ff*

Un - ed - u - cate

*f*

*ff*

6

3

This musical score is for a piano piece, likely a variation on a theme. It features a vocal line and two piano accompaniment staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal line begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a crescendo leading to fortissimo (*ff*). The piano accompaniment starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings (3, 6, 3). The piece concludes with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and a final flourish.



18 *Slower* ♩ = 60  
*mp*

and Po - e - try wouldretch

*f* *ff*

*p* *mf*

6 3

20

*f* *pp*

8 8

8

Leo. ...



# a wolfpack thundered in and tore me lengthwise

Music by Brian Baxter

(b. 1985)

Text by Joshua Ziemann

(b. 1986)

Violently  $\text{♩} = 120$

*ff*

*8va*

$\text{♩} = 90$

*8va*

*f*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*8vb*

a wolf - pack



*f*

thun - dered

(8vb) ...

in and tore me length - wise

*mp* ...

ven - ting my chest

*mf* *f* *mf*

*f* *mp* *mf*

as it howled

*mp* *f*

*mp* *mf*

2



24

*mf*

o - ver a qui - ver - ing

*sub.p*

*Rec.*

27

< *ff*

Tortured Reflection ♩ = 60

*fist*

*f* *ff*

31

*f**ff*

I shot it and it qui-vered and howled more

*f* *ff* *f* *ff* *n*

*8vb*

*Rec.*

36

Slower ♩ = 48

*p* *mp*



40 *rit.* 3-4"

*f* *p* *pp* 3-4"

44 **Violently** ♩. = 76

*f* *Red.*

46 *f*

ven - ting blood a - cross my chest

*mf* *8va*

50 *mf* *f* *ff*

as it <sup>2</sup> howled and kept ven - ting a

*(8va)* *mp* *Red.*



53

wolf - pack thun-dered in and tore me length -  
 (8va)  
*mf* *f*  
 2 2 2 2  
*And.*

56

wise  
*sub.p* *ff*  
*ff*

60

rit.  $\text{♩} = 60$   
*ff* *f* *mf* *mp*



# your could would

Music by Brian Baxter

(b. 1985)

Text by Joshua Ziemann

(b. 1986)

Adagio  $\text{♩} = 60$

slight accel. - - - - -

Piano introduction in 4/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp*, *f*, *mf*, *ff*, and *mf*. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

First system of the vocal entry. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "your could would" and "crush these in-de-cen-cies". The piano accompaniment features triplets in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *p*, and *mf*. A *sub* (suboctave) marking is present in the left hand.

Second system of the vocal entry. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "your could would" and "crush these in-de-cen-". The piano accompaniment continues with triplets and a bass line. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *mf*. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present at the beginning of the system.



10 *p* *mp* *mf*

cies stir them in spar - kle

*p* *mp*

14 *f* *mp* *f*

lime lus - ter and

*f*

18 *ff* *pp* accel. ----- Allegro ♩ = 76

drink to a whole new

*pp*

Sub.  
Red.



23

*p* *mp*

(8vb)

32

*p* *mp* *p*

39

*mp* *mf* *mp*

44

*f* *ff*

your would — if on - ly a sweet bre - vi - ty

*mf* *sf*



47

♩ = 132

sub. a tempo ♩ = 76

*ff*

47

stir in grain

*pp* *f*

49

Calmly ♩ = 69

*f**mf*

49

your laugh - ter and spar - kle

*f* *mf*

6 *ff* *mf*

52

*mf**p*3-4"  
//attaca

52

a lit - tle smile to

*mf* *p* *pp*

15<sup>ma</sup>



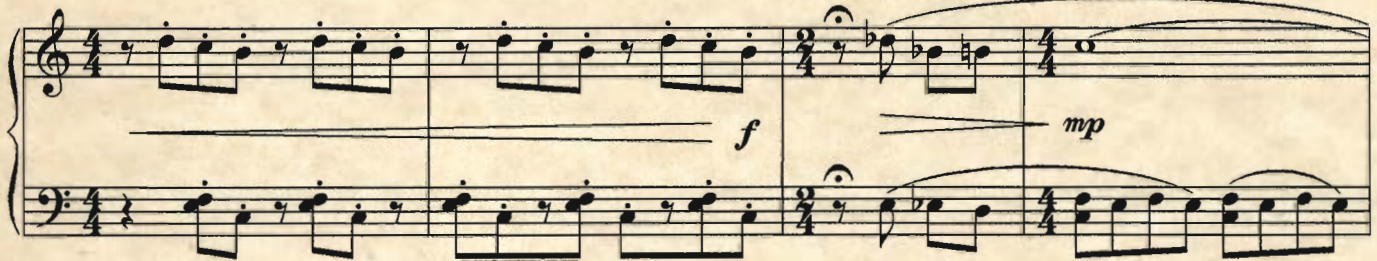
# Chaos Bush

Music by Brian Baxter  
(b. 1985)  
Text by Joshua Ziemann  
(b. 1986)

Moderato ♩ = 76



a tempo ♩ = 72



13 mp

A temp-est - u-ous bough \_\_\_\_\_ in glor-i - ous yoke — blooms yoke —



17 *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

blooms pro - trud - ed split twigs be - tween rust-y links

21 *mp* *f*

and twist-ed them in - to a fine hand - shake fine hand - shake

25 *rit.* *Elevated (freely) ♩ = 76*

*mp* *mf* *sf* *f*

29 *mp* *mf*

A temp - est - u - ous bough in glor - i - ous yoke blooms

*> mp*

*simile*



32 *p* *sub. f*

yoke blooms pro - trud - ed split

*mf*

35 *mf* *f* *accel.*

twigs be - tween rust - y links

38 *ff* *f* *mf* *n*

and twist - ed them in - to a fine hand shake

*f*

41 *f* *sub. p* *p* *pp*

a fine hand - shake

*p* *mp* *f* *sub. p* *pp*

*rallentando* *8va* *8vb*



# "(a riddle)"

Music by Brian Baxter

(b. 1985)

Text by Joshua Ziemann

(b. 1986)

Moderato con moto ♩ = 72

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It begins with a tempo marking of "Moderato con moto" and a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The piano part features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand, with dynamic markings of *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *p*, and *f*. The vocal part enters in the first system with a melody in the treble clef, accompanied by a sustained octave chord in the right hand of the piano. The lyrics "Though sci-on am I of great" are written under the vocal line. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. The piece concludes with a "slight rit." marking and a tempo change to a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The final system shows the piano part with a *ff* dynamic and the vocal part with a *f* dynamic, both leading to a final chord.

3

5

slight rit. ♩ = 60

Though sci-on am I of great

8va

pp mp p mf p f

ff mf f mf



accel.

$\text{♩} = 72$

8

*mf*

*mp*

trees

I

sway

*p*

*mp*

*Rec.*

Faster  $\text{♩} = 80$

10

*< f*

*f*

*ff*

not

with

a

lev - el breeze

*< f*

*mf*

*ff*

*f*

*Rec.*

*Out*

14

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*sub.f*

17

Nor

do

I

bud

nor

green

or

rise

*mf*

*f*

*p*

*sub.mf*

3



20

*f* *mp*

A to - tem bared; at - ten - tive

23

*pp*

guise

*p* *pp* *mf* *ff* *f*

*8va* *8vb*

27

*8vb*

32

*ff* *f*

I plow the dark - ness,

*8vb*



*f*

reigns \_\_\_\_\_ in hand of all your

*mp* *mf*

world \_\_\_\_\_

*sf* *f* *ff*

*8vb*

rit. rit.

*ff* *p*

I \_\_\_\_\_ light<sup>3</sup> the land \_\_\_\_\_ *8va*

*mf* *f* *pp* *ff*

*8vb*