

## NOTES

Keynote Arts Associates commissions works for chorus and orchestra that are premiered at the Keynote Choral Festivals held annually at several United States locations. Although the music is created primarily for festival choirs, it is appropriate for choral ensembles of all ages; hence the publication by Laurendale Associates of the Keynote Festival Series of commissioned works. Each composition is carefully selected to insure a rewarding musical experience for students, directors and audiences. The initial creative review process assures an exceptional new body of literature for a wide variety of choral ensembles.

TWO WHITMAN SONGS was commissioned for the Keynote Chicago Festival, April, 1994, and written for large chorus and medium-sized orchestra. The text is drawn from a two-part poem "Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun" which is part of a collection, "Drum Taps" written by Walt Whitman during the Civil War.

- The first part of the poem is a paean to nature and the countryside; there is no mention of the war. The music is, for the most part quiet and gentle, creating a bucolic atmosphere.

- The second part of the poem begins "Keep your splendid silent sun" and the first four lines, all beginning with *Keep* are set for soprano solo. The poetry then extolls the excitement of the city, in this case New York ("Give me faces and streets"). Although there are several war references in this part, I decided to omit those lines and center on the city with music that is quasi ragtime and jazz. At the end I have split the chorus into two groups with the second choir returning to the pastoral music of part I - it eventually takes over and the whole work ends quietly as it began.

- Whitman, with his great zest for life let his exuberance wash over both countryside and city. I like to think that nature has the last word though I personally love Manhattan, where I live.

*Gregg Smith*

## TEXTS

### Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun

Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams  
full-dazzling.

Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the  
orchard.

Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,  
Give me an arbor, give me the trellis'd grape,  
Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-  
moving animals teaching content,

Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus  
west of the Mississippi,  
and I looking up at the stars,

Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful  
flowers where I can walk undisturb'd,

Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of  
whom I should never tire,

Give me a perfect child, give me away aside from  
the noise of the world a rural domestic life,

Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by  
myself, for my own ears only,

Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again  
O Nature your primal sanities!

### Interlude

#### "Keep your splendid silent sun"

Keep your splendid silent sun,  
Keep your woods O Nature, and the quiet places  
by the woods,

Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your  
corn-fields and orchards,

Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields where the  
Ninth-month bees hum;

### Give Me Faces and Streets

Give me faces and streets—give me these phantoms  
Incessant and endless along the trottoirs!

Give me interminable eyes—give me women—give me  
friends and comrades by the thousand!

Let me see new ones every day—let me hold new  
ones by the hand every day!

Give me such shows—give me the streets of Manhattan!  
Give me Broadway!

Give me the shores and wharves heavy-fringed with  
black ships!

O such for me! O an intense life, full to repletion  
and varied!

The life of the theatre, bar-room, huge hotel, for me!  
The saloon of the steamer! the crowded excursion  
for me! the torchlight procession!

People, endless, streaming, with strong voices,  
passions, pageants,

Manhattan streets with their powerful throbs, with  
beating drums as now,

Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical chorus!  
Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.



Commissioned by Keynote Arts Associates, James E. Dash, president,  
for the 1994 Chicago Choral Festival, Alexander Dashnaw, Artistic Director

# Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun

Walt Whitman

Andante Moderato ♩ = c. 92 SATB with Piano, 4 hands (reduction)

Gregg Smith

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano reduction (4 hands)

Andante Moderato ♩ = c. 92

*p*

Give me the splen-did

9

S.

A.

T.

B.

*poco*

*mp*

si - lent sun, the splen-did si - lent sun, the

*mp*

Give me the splen-did si - lent sun, the

*mf*

Give me the

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17

S. *mf* Give me the splen - did si - lent sun, *p* with

A. splen - did si - lent sun, the splen - did si - lent sun with *p*

T. splen - did si - lent sun, the splen - did si - lent sun with *p*

B. splen - did si - lent sun, the splen - did si - lent sun with *p*

8va

*mf* *p*

25

S. all his beams full dazz - - - ling. *rit.*

A. all his beams full dazz - - - ling. *rit.*

T. all his beams full dazz - - - ling. *rit.*

B. all his beams full dazz - - - ling. *rit.*

(8va)

*rit.* *pp*

Allegro (♩ = ♩ = c. 138)



31

Soprano/Alto *p*

Tenor/Bass *p*

S. Give me juic - y au - tum - nal fruit ripe and

B. Give me juic - y au - tum - nal fruit ripe and

36

S. red from the or - chard, Give me a field

B. red from the or - chard, Give me a field

*mp*

*mp*

*p*

41

S. *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*  
 where the un - mow'd grass grows, Give me an ar - bor,

B. *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*  
 where the un - mow'd grass grows, Give me an ar - bor,

46

S. give me the trel - lis'd grape, Give me fresh corn and

B. give me the trel - lis'd grape, Give me fresh corn and



# INTERLUDE

## Keep Your Splendid Silent Sun

Walt Whitman

Gregg Smith

Very Slow ♩ = c. 42-46

*freely*

Soprano solo

Keep your splen - did si - lent sun,

Piano reduction (4 hands)

*p*

4

S. Keep your woods — O Na - ture, — and the qui - et pla - ces by the

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system features a soprano solo line and a piano reduction for four hands. The tempo is marked 'Very Slow' with a metronome marking of approximately 42-46 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The soprano line begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics 'Keep your splen - did si - lent sun,'. The piano reduction includes a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. The second system continues the soprano line with the lyrics 'Keep your woods — O Na - ture, — and the qui - et pla - ces by the'. A box containing the number '4' is placed above the first measure of this system. The piano reduction continues with a 5/4 time signature change and a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand.

6

S. woods, Keep your fields of clo - ver and tim - o - thy,

8

S. and your corn - fields and or - chards,

10

S. Keep the blos - som - ing buck - wheat fields where the Ninth - month bees — hum.



# Give Me Faces and Streets

SATB with Piano, 4 hands (reduction)

Walt Whitman

Gregg Smith

Allegro ♩ = c. 152

Piano reduction (4 hands)

*mp*

*mp*

(CB. Pizz.)

6

S.

A.

T.

B.

*mf*

Give me

*mf*

Give

*Sva.*  
(Cl.)

*mf*



10

S. *mf* Give me fac - es and

A. fac - es and streets

T. me fac - es and streets,

B. *mf* Give me fac - es and

(8va)

(Ob.) *mf*

14

S. *mf* streets, give me these phan - thoms in -

A.

T.

B. *mf* streets, give me these

(8va)



18

S. ces - sant,

A. *mf* and end-less a - long the trot - toirs!

T. *mf* and end-less a - long the trot - toirs!

B. phan-thoms in - ces - sant,

(8va)

22

S.

A.

T.

B.

(8va)



27

*p* Give me in-ter-min-a-ble eyes,— give me wo-men, give me friends and com - rads

*p* Give me in-ter-min-a-ble eyes,— give me wo-men, give me friends and com - rads

*mp* *8va*

*pp*

31

*f* by the thou - sand! Let me see new ones ev - 'ry

*f* by the thou - sand! Let me see new ones ev - 'ry

*8va*

*mp*

*pp*