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Program Notes

In early 2002, while waiting for William Luce to complete the libretto for our new opera *Gabriel's Daughter*, I began sketching several songs for soprano, many based upon the words of a favorite poet of mine, Emily Dickinson. I wanted to preserve the elegance and clarity of text by keeping my music relatively simple in content, suitable for young professionals and college-age students of voice. The songs are dedicated to my friend, John Moriarty, one of the great vocal coaches and teachers of our time. A former teacher of mine at New England Conservatory in Boston, John Moriarty has strongly inspired me with his deep love and knowledge of lieder and opera, and made possible for me my first experience in the professional opera world as an “apprentice coach and composer” with the Lake George Opera Festival in the late 1960s. He has trained a great many professional singers since then, and these songs are intended as a tribute to his good work.

— Henry Mollicone
August, 2002

Information on the Poet and the Source for the Texts

Emily Dickinson (b. Amherst, Massachusetts, December 10, 1830; d. Amherst, Massachusetts, May 15, 1886).

“There is another sky” - ca. 1851, from *Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1890.

“God made a little Gentian” - ca. 1862, from *Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1890.

“Poor Little Heart!” - ca. 1860, from *Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1890.

THREE SIMPLE SONGS

1. There is another sky

There is another sky,
Ever serene and fair,
And there is another sunshine,
Though it be darkness there;
Never mind faded forests, Austin,
Never mind silent fields –
Here is a little forest,
Whose leaf is ever green;
Here is a brighter garden,
Where not a frost has been;
In its unfading flowers
I hear the bright bee hum;
Prithee, my brother,
Into *my* garden come!

2. God made a little Gentian

God made a little Gentian –
It tried – to be a Rose –
And failed – and all the Summer laughed –
But just before the Snows

There rose a Purple Creature –
That ravished all the Hill –
And Summer hid her Forehead –
And Mockery – was still –

The Frosts were her condition –
The Tyrian would not come
Until the North – invoke it –
Creator – Shall I – bloom?

3. Poor little Heart!

Poor little Heart!
Did they forget thee?
Then dinna care! Then dinna care!

Proud little Heart!
Did they forsake thee?
Be debonnaire! Be debonnaire!

Frail little Heart!
I would not break thee –
Could'st credit *me*? Could'st credit me?

Gay little Heart –
Like Morning Glory!
Wind and Sun – wilt thee array!

Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

Three Simple Songs

for Soprano and Piano

Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

Henry Mollicone

1. There Is Another Sky

Adagio $\text{♩} = 52$

Soprano

Adagio $\text{♩} = 52$
espress.

Piano

mp sempre rubato, flessibile

4

poco rit.

7

a tempo

p flessibile, peacefully

There is an-oth - er sky, _____

a tempo

p

11

Ev - er se - rene and fair, _____ And

14

there is an - oth - er sun - shine, Though it be dark - ness

17

there; _____ Nev - er mind fad - ed for - ests, Aus - tin,

20

Nev-er mind si - lent fields - Here is a lit - tle

23

for - est, Whose leaf is ev - er green;

p *poco rit.* *a tempo* *mp*

p *poco rit.* *mp espress.*

5 4 3

26

Ah, ah, -

2. God Made a Little Gentian

Moderato ♩ = 112 *p semplice*

God made a lit - tle

Moderato ♩ = 112 *p*

4 Gen - tian - It tried to be a Rose - And failed - and

r.h.

7 all the Sum-mer laughed, and all the Sum-mer laughed - But just be-fore the Snows There

ped. * *ped.* * *ped.* *

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'God Made a Little Gentian'. It is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Moderato' with a metronome marking of ♩ = 112. The score is in three systems. The first system shows the vocal line starting with 'God made a lit - tle' and the piano accompaniment. The second system starts at measure 4 with the lyrics 'Gen - tian - It tried to be a Rose - And failed - and'. The piano accompaniment includes a right-hand part marked 'r.h.' in the third measure. The third system starts at measure 7 with the lyrics 'all the Sum-mer laughed, and all the Sum-mer laughed - But just be-fore the Snows There'. The piano accompaniment features a repeating rhythmic pattern in the bass line, indicated by 'ped.' and '*' symbols.

10

rose a Pur - ple Crea - ture - That rav - ished all the

red. red. * red.

13

Hill - And Sum - mer hid her Fore - head - And

red. * red. * red. *

16

Mock - er - y, and Mock - er - y was - still - The

red. red. red.

3. Poor Little Heart

Adagio ♩ = 50

Adagio ♩ = 50

p dolce

con ped.

This system contains the first two staves of the piece. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff is a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music is marked 'Adagio ♩ = 50'. The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The lyrics 'Poor lit-tle Heart! Did they for-get thee? Then din-na care!_ Then din-na care!' are written below the first staff.

3 *p dolce, gently*

3 *p dolce, gently*

Poor lit-tle Heart! Did they for-get thee? Then din-na care!_ Then din-na care!

This system contains the third and fourth staves of the piece. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff is a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music is marked '3 p dolce, gently'. The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The lyrics 'Poor lit-tle Heart! Did they for-get thee? Then din-na care!_ Then din-na care!' are written below the first staff.

5

5

Proud lit-tle Heart! Did they for-sake thee? Be deb-on - naire!_ Be deb-on - naire!_

This system contains the fifth and sixth staves of the piece. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff is a bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music is marked '5'. The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The lyrics 'Proud lit-tle Heart! Did they for-sake thee? Be deb-on - naire!_ Be deb-on - naire!_' are written below the first staff.

7

mp

Frail lit-tle Heart! Frail lit-tle Heart! Frail lit-tle Heart! *I* would not break thee – Could'st

mp

9

p *poco rit.*

cred-it me?_ Could'st cred-it me?_ Could'st cred - it me?

p *poco rit.*

11

a tempo
p

Poor lit-tle Heart! Did they for-get thee? Then din-na care! _ Then din-na care!

a tempo
p