

The Gift To Sing

Text by
James Weldon Johnson

Music by
Coleman Peterson



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About the composer

Coleman Peterson (b. 1997) is a South-Dakota-based composer, lyricist, and educator. A recent graduate of Augustana University with degrees in music, theatre, and elementary education, he enjoys writing, teaching, and creating for an extensive number of genres. Through all his creations, he enjoys representing both himself and his generation through language, time, and sound.

The Gift to Sing

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

Sometimes the mist overhangs my path,
And blackening clouds about me cling;
But, oh, I have a magic way
To turn the gloom to cheerful day—
I softly sing.

And if the way grows darker still,
Shadowed by Sorrow's somber wing,
With glad defiance in my throat,
I pierce the darkness with a note,
And sing, and sing.

I brood not over the broken past,
Nor dread whatever time may bring;
No nights are dark, no days are long,
While in my heart there swells a song,
And I can sing.

Ranges

S A T B



recording and rehearsal tracks available at sbmp.com

Awarded the 2020 Kyle Pederson Composition Prize
and dedicated to the Augustana University treble ensemble, Angelus

The Gift to Sing

James Weldon Johnson

Coleman Peterson

Contemplative ♩ = 75 *mp*

S
A
T
B

mp Some-
mp Some-
mp Some-
mp Some-

Piano *mp*

5

times the _ mist _ o-ver-hangs my _ path, _ And black-'ning _ clouds a-round me _

times the _ mist _ o-ver-hangs my _ path, _ And black-'ning _ clouds a-round me _

times the _ mist _ o-ver-hangs my _ path, _ And black-'ning _ clouds a-round me _

times the _ mist _ o-ver-hangs my _ path, _ And black-'ning _ clouds a-round me _

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1784-3

— cling; — But, oh, I have a mag-ic way — To

— cling; — But, oh, I have a mag-ic way — To

— cling; — But, oh, I have a mag-ic way — To

— cling; — But, oh, to

turn the gloom to cheer-ful day— I sing. I soft-ly

turn the gloom to cheer-ful day— I sing. I soft-ly

turn the gloom to cheer-ful day— I sing. I soft-ly

turn, I sing. I soft-ly

12

14

PREVIEW

16

Sing!

Sing!

Sing!

Sing!

cel.

18

sing.

I sing.

I sing.

I sing.

accel.

20

Moving now ♩ = 85

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

Moving now ♩ = 85

mf

PREVIEW

And if the way grows dark-er still,

And if the way grows dark-er still,

And if the way grows dark-er still,

And if the way grows dark-er still,

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25

glad de-fi - ance in my throat, I pierce the dark-ness with a note, And ___

glad de-fi - ance in my throat, I pierce the dark-ness with a note, And ___

glad de-fi - ance in my throat, I pierce the dark-ness with a note, And ___

glad de-fi - ance in my throat, I pierce the dark-ness with a note, And ___

27

— sing, — sing. —

— sing, — and — sing. —

— sing, — and — sing. —

— sing, — and — sing. —

Broadly

29 *f*

Sing!

f

Sing!

f

Sing!

f

Sing!

Broadly

31

Sing!

Sing!

Sing!

Sing!

Sing!

33

Sing! And

Sing! And

8 Sing! And

Sing! And

35

PREVIEW

— sing! — And — sing! — And

— sing! — And — sing! — And

— sing! — And — sing! — And

— sing! — And — sing! — And

Letting up, rit.

37

Four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major. Each staff contains a melodic line with lyrics: "sing, and sing,". The music is marked "Letting up, rit." and features a long, sweeping melodic line across the measures.

Letting up, rit.

Piano accompaniment for measures 37-39. The right hand plays chords and moving lines, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. The music is marked "Letting up, rit." and features a long, sweeping melodic line across the measures.

40

Four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major. Each staff contains a melodic line with lyrics: "and sing... and sing...". The music is marked "Letting up, rit." and features a long, sweeping melodic line across the measures. Dynamics include *p* (piano).

Piano accompaniment for measures 40-42. The right hand plays chords and moving lines, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. The music is marked "Letting up, rit." and features a long, sweeping melodic line across the measures. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Easy ♩ = 75

Sweeping

43

I brood not o'er

Easy ♩ = 75

Sweeping

46

the bro - ken past, Nor

...Brood not o'er the bro - ken past, Nor

the bro - ken past, Nor

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Faster ♩ = 90

49

dread what - ev - er time may bring; No

dread what - ev - er time may bring; No

8 dread what - ev - er time may bring; No

dread what - ev - er time may bring; No

Faster ♩ = 90

With energy!

52

nights are dark, no days are long, While

nights are dark, no days are long, While

8 nights are dark, no days are long, While

nights are dark, no days are long, While

With energy!

54

in my heart there swells a song...

in my heart there swells a song...

8 in my heart there swells a song...

in my heart there swells a song...

Soaring!

56

Sing! And I can

Sing!

Sing!

Sing!

Soaring!

8vb

58

sing!

Sing!

Sing!

Sing!

8vb

60

Sing, and *mp*

Sing, and *mp*

Sing, and *mp*

Sing, and *mp*

Sing, and

DO NOT
PHOTOCOPY



62

sing, and sing, and
 sing, and sing, and
 sing, and sing, and
 sing, and sing, and
 sing, and sing, and
 sing, and sing, and

mp

PREVIEW

64

sing! *ff*
 sing! *ff*
 sing! *ff*
 sing! *ff*
 sing! *f* *ff*