

Aoi Sora Wa/青い空は/The Blue Sky by Noa Sherman

Aoi Sora Wa (青い空は) is a Hiroshima song of peace that was written after the Atomic Bomb that was dropped in 1945. This song reminds us not only to savor each moment in our lives but to appreciate others' lives as well. It is well-known by all ages in Hiroshima and is frequently sung in schools. I arranged this piece because my great-grandparents and my grandfather were 被爆者 Hibakusha (The people affected by the atomic bombing). My grandfather was 14 when the bomb dropped, his entire family passed away close to a month later. This led him to become the only survivor of the atomic bomb in our family. However, he passed away 15 years ago. Fortunately, his incredible stories have been passed down to my generation. His strong willpower and determination motivate our entire family and have inspired me to spread peace around the world with my music. If you are inspired by this piece, I highly encourage visiting the Hiroshima Peace Park and the Atomic Dome. It is heartbreaking, but also motivational.

AOI SORA WA AOI MAMA DE KODOMORA NI
TSUTAETAU.

The sky is blue, I want to let the children know
that it will stay that way.

MOERU HACHIGATSU NO ASA

The burning morning of August was so hot that

KAGE MADE MOETSUKITA.

Even the shadows melted away

CHICHI NO (CHICHI NO) HAHA NO (HAHA NO)

Father's life, (Father's life)

KYODAI TACHI NO

Mother's life (Mother's life)

INOCHI NO OMOMI WO KATANI SEWOTTE

And my sibling's lives too

MUNE NI IDAITE

Feel and carry their lives on your shoulder.

AOI SORA WA AOI MAMADE KODOMORA NI
TSUTAETAU.

And remember to hold their lives in your chest
forever.

ANO YO HO SHI WA DAMATTE TSURESATTE ITTA

The sky is blue, I want to let the children know
that it will stay that way.

CHICHI NO (CHICHI NO) HAHA NO (HAHA NO)

That night, the stars grew silent and were taken
away by the darkness.

KYODAI TACHI NO

Father's life, (Father's life)

INOCHI NO OMOMI WO

Mother's life (Mother's life)

IMA NAGASU TOUROU NO

And my sibling's lives too

HIKARI NI KOMETE

Feel the weight of their lives

And watch as my lantern floats on the dark water

Shine with eternal hope and light.

Ukolebavka by Charles Gabriel McDermott

My composition “Ukolébavka” is an arrangement of a piece by Gideon Klein of the same name. He composed this work in February, 1943. “Ukolébavka” is Czech and translates to “Lullaby”. Gideon Klein adapted his melody from a traditional Chasidic niggun. He composed this art song for piano and soprano, and used select lines from a Hebrew poem by Emmanuel Harussi. These lines tell the story of a lullaby sung to a child at night in the kibbutz. The kibbutz movement started in 1909 and was comprised of communal villages that settled the land of Israel. These communes were formed by groups of Jewish immigrants who most commonly emigrated from various places in Eastern Europe.

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| Shechav beni shechav bimenuchah, | Lie down my son lie down restfully, |
| Al na tivkeh marah | Do not cry bitterly |
| Al yadcha yoshevet ‘imcha | Your mother is sitting next to you |
| Shomeret mikol ra | Guarding against any evil |
| Meyallel Meyallel baya’ar hatan | The jackal wails in the forest |
| Haruach haruach noshevet sham | And the wind is blowing there |
| Shechav beni shechav bimenuchah | Lie down my son lie down restfully |
| Numa numa shan | Sleep, sleep, slumber |
| Laila, Laila Laila tzel | Night, night, night shadow |
| Ya’uf maher me’od | Will fly very quickly |
| ‘Assur, ‘assur, ‘assur lehit atzel | You mustn’t, mustn’t, mustn’t be lazy |
| Machar tzarich la’avod | Tomorrow it is necessary to work |
| Machar yetze aba lacharosh | Tomorrow father will go out to plow |
| Betelem, betelem yelech ha’av | In farrow, in farrow, father will walk |
| Ach’ atah beni hakatan | Only you my little son |
| Numa, numa shan | |

Abide with Me by Milo Brody

Abide With Me is a traditional hymn, with lyrics written by Henry Francis Lyte in 1847, just two months before his death. The music of Abide With Me is Eventide, by William Henry Monk, written in 1861. This arrangement of the church hymn takes inspiration from the original four part harmony and other adaptations of the piece, with each verse being slightly different. The original text contains four verses, but in this arrangement, the fourth verse has been omitted, making room for other speculations about the meaning of the text, and also leaving room for some leading notes in the bass section towards the exciting close to the piece.

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide
The darkness deepens Lord, with me abide
When other helpers fail and comforts flee
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away
Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou who changest not, abide with me

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness
Where is death's sting?
Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee
In life, in death, o Lord, abide with me
Abide with me, abide with me

Possibility by Noa Sherman

Possibility is an original piece with text inspired by the poem I dwell in Possibility by Emily Dickinson. This composition emphasizes the numerous amount of 'possibilities' that can be found 'hiding' in our daily lives. Sometimes, it may feel difficult to find these 'possibilities'. The blending in this song symbolizes unity and connection. Focusing on allowing ourselves to connect and understand others will guide us on our way towards Possibility and finding Paradise.

I dwell in Possibility –

A fairer House than Prose –

More numerous of Windows –

Superior – for Doors –

Of Chambers as the Cedars –

Impregnable of eye –

And for an everlasting Roof

The Gambrels of the Sky –

Of Visitors – the fairest –

For Occupation – This –

The spreading wide my narrow Hands

To gather Paradise –

On Divinity by Charles Gabriel McDermott

My original composition "On Divinity" is an exploration of Friedrich Nietzsche's "The Gay Science (Die fröhliche Wissenschaft)". I have taken words from section 125, *The Parable of the Madman*. The original translated text is as follows (the text I have used is in bold):

"The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. Whither is God?" he cried; "I will tell you. We have killed him, you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how did we do this? **How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down?** Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? **Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us?** Do we not need to light lanterns in the morning? Do we hear nothing as yet of the noise of the gravediggers who are burying God? **Do we smell nothing as yet of the divine decomposition? Gods, too, decompose. God is dead.** God remains dead. And we have killed him."

This is not the repeated philosophy of Nietzsche set to music, but rather, a select edit representing my own contemplations. The piece is an invitation to ponder. The structure follows the shape of my favorite kind of reverie: dreamy, dark, occasionally gruesome, and briefly humorous.

On Loving Life by Milo Brody

On Loving Life is an original piece with music by Milo Brody, and text by Alaya Rocco. The composition is about time, its endless cycles, and how not to lose it. Consequently, the piece is written in cycles, as it seeks to shed light on the little things in life, and the importance of focusing on them. The music reflects this idea of time, as the sections begin to blend together and repeat, while still moving on continuously.

between curves of smiles and hidden laughs

hides cornered sadness wrapped inside

beaten and hammered back into place

hidden between those silent fingertips

intertwined

fixed so to say, no longer a burden

but time keeps ticking an unsaid sermon

one more grain of lost sand

no matter how lost

no matter how run down

hands uncrossed

nothing phases time

fingers dropped along with smiles

old flames are stamped out

maybe we're blowing on coals

the lights lost are too many to count

yet still time doesn't care

no matter how lost

no matter how run down

covered in frost

nothing phases time

so leave your smiles

let your laughs ring out

intertwine your hands again

cause unphased time will tick on

The show must go on

no matter how lost

no matter how run down

nothing phases time....

Is That You/Tell Me It's Okay by Tyler Gjerde

This piece is a combination of two separate poems attempting to cope with the struggle of the loss of a loved one. The first poem, "Is That You?" by Robyn O'Rourke, depicts the grieving of a mother whose son passed away during a seizure in his sleep. The cause of the seizure is still unknown. The poem, "Tell Me It's Okay" by Tiffany Underwood, laments the loss of her second born and first daughter, Casey Lynn.

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| Is that you? | | Tell me it's okay |
| The falling star in the night, So pure, so bright. | Is that you? Who makes me smile at life's irony That other people often cannot see. | And that you're comin' along. Tell me it's okay |
| Is that you? The breeze gently blowing through my hair Telling me that you are still there. | Is that you? Who gives me strength to carry on Even though you are gone. | And that you're staying by me. Tell me it's okay, And that this life is meant to be . . . Tell me it's okay |
| Is that you? The golden ball rising in the east, Bringing hope that a new day, the sorrow will ease. | Is that you? Yes, it is you. You are with me always. | To feel how I'm feeling. Tell me it's okay - The way that I am dealing. Tell me it's okay - That there is a reason for it all. |
| Is that you? Setting in the west, Bringing a night of peace and rest. | Tell me it's okay To just want to cry. Tell me it's okay To never say goodbye. | Tell me it's okay, Even if I fall. Tell me it's okay |
| Is that you? Who dries my tears As I gaze towards my future fears. | Tell me it's okay To be afraid to be strong. | To lose control today. Tell me it's okay. Just tell me it's okay. |

Divorce by Iris Milagros Barrera

The poem 'Divorce' by Anna Wickham is not about marital divorce as one may first assume. 'Divorce' refers instead to a state of internal conflict and being split between two minds. The text tells of a divorce between the head and the heart, and being unsure of which to follow. It is believed that the poem was Wickham expressing her own anguish in living a traditional life with her husband while having an intimate relationship with another woman during the marriage. This clash is represented in the piece with contrasting melodies and dynamics that illustrate the nuance and changes of tone in the text.

A voice from the dark is calling me.

In the close house I nurse a fire.

Out in the dark, cold winds rush free,

To the rock heights of my desire.

I smother in the house in the valley below,

Let me out to the night, let me go, let me go.

Spirits that ride the sweeping blast,

Frozen in rigid tenderness,

Wait! for I leave the fire at last

My little-love's warm loneliness.

I smother in the house in the valley below.

Let me out to the night, let me go, let me go.

High on the hills are beating drums.

Clear from a line of marching men

To the rock's edge the hero comes

He calls me, and he calls again.

On the hill there is fighting, victory, or quick death.

In the house is the fire, which I fan with sick breath.

I smother in the house in the valley below,

Let me out to the dark, let me go, let me go.

Wild Mountain Thyme by Iris Milagros Barrera

Oh, the summer time is coming,
And the trees are sweetly blooming,
And the wild mountain thyme
Grows around the blooming heather.
Will ye go, lassie go?

And we'll all go together
To pluck wild mountain thyme
All around the blooming heather,
Will ye go, lassie, go?

I will build my love a tower
Near yon pure crystal fountain,
And on it I will build,
All the flowers of the mountain.
Will ye go, lassie go?

If my true love, she were gone,
I will surely find another
Where wild mountain thyme
Grows around the blooming heather.
Will ye go, lassie go?

Oh, the summertime is coming
And the trees are sweetly blooming
And the wild mountain thyme
Grows around the blooming heather.
Will ye go, lassie go?

When the Stars Begin to Fall by Tyler Gjerde

When the Stars Begin to Fall, subtitled Oh Lord, What a Morning, is one of many anonymous spirituals sung in the fields and in worship by African-American slaves in the 19th century. This arrangement is an adaptation of many themes from the spiritual.

My Lord, what a morning
When the stars begin to fall

You will weep for the rocks and mountains
When the stars begin to fall

My Lord, what a morning
When the stars begin to fall

You will hear the shout of victory
When the stars begin to fall

My Lord, what a morning
When the stars begin to fall