



Amy Gordon

As Time Stops To Rest

A Three-Movement Choral Song Cycle

Dedicated to Susan Jordan

- I. Two Friends
- II. Storm's End
- III. Magic

Music by Amy Gordon

Text by Susan Jordan

Instrumentation: SSAATTBB Choir and Piano, with Soprano & Tenor Soloists

Duration: 15 minutes

As Time Stops To Rest is a three-movement song cycle for SSAATTBB Choir and Piano, with featured Soprano and Tenor soloists. The cycle is dedicated to the composer's late aunt Susan Jordan. The works sets three poems from a larger set of poetry entitled *As Time Stops To Rest*, also written by Susan Jordan. The song cycle has an overall arch form of peace followed by tragedy and loss, ultimately giving way to a final sense of peace.

The first movement, **Two Friends**, paints a peaceful scene of two friends losing track of time as they sit by the ocean enjoying their time together. The piece opens with serene rolled chords in the piano, which continue throughout almost the entirety of the movement. The constant rolling of the piano creates a sense of ocean waves continuously ebbing and flowing. The opening Tenor solo describes the tranquil setting and is then joined by the full choir as "warmth and happiness intermix to form an afternoon shared by two close friends". The movement features lush harmonies and detailed ensemble interplay. The movement concludes with the continued rolled chords in the piano and a final soft low cluster, as if the texture is sinking into the ocean.

The second movement, **Storm's End**, opens with violent and flurried storm-like arpeggios in the piano, in stark contrast to the peaceful character of **Two Friends**. The Tenors and Basses open with a rigid imitative texture asserting how "the storm raged across the bliss field". The piano then mimics raindrops falling more and more violently before finally giving way to a calmer texture. After the "storm" has ended, the full choir enters in a mostly homophonic, hymn-like texture describing an overwhelming peace that sometimes follows after an intense tragedy or loss. The piece climaxes on the words "day" and "fire", alluding to the feeling of being in love with one's life despite (and perhaps because of) the pain and suffering one has endured.

The third and final movement, **Magic**, describes how the narrator senses the closeness of "the spirit kingdom" all around him or her, but only has fleeting glimpses of it. The piece opens with an a cappella dialogue between the Altos and Tenors, who are then joined by the Sopranos and Basses. The a cappella opening features lush and tightly packed harmonies that lead to a soprano soloist cueing in a lyrical piano arpeggio. The piece then builds to the joyous climax of the whole song cycle: "But oh, for a moment I grow flowers with my hands!", alluding to how powerful and wondrous these brief glimpses of the spirit kingdom are. The texture then drops down to lulling a cappella chords in the lower voices as two featured Soprano soloists "dance on wings uplifted". The narrator then finally enters "the kingdom of all" he or she has been sensing, possibly through death. The movement concludes peacefully as the narrator "enter[s] the kingdom of all and AM". The piano concludes with a peaceful postlude recalling motives used throughout the movement.

This song cycle would be suitable for an advanced high school, college, or professional choir. The movements may be performed as stand-alone pieces or as part of the full cycle.

About the composer: Amy Gordon is an active composer, arranger, songwriter, and vocalist based in Los Angeles, CA. As a choral composer, she has worked with and been commissioned by numerous choirs, including being the composer-in-residence for Nova Vocal Ensemble. She has also scored numerous films and webcasts. She has a BA in Composition from Loyola Marymount University and an MM in Composition from California State University, Long Beach.

Text

I. TWO FRIENDS

The sun touched the waiting air
As wind and ocean sounds
Combined
With gulls laughing
Overhead
Warmth and happiness
Intermixed
To form
An afternoon
Shared by two close friends
So close we missed
The passing of time
So touched by our friendship
So eager to communicate
The moments in life
That freeze and hold still
Caught in the magic
Of true reality
Caught truly conscious
Of our connection
Two friends
Surrounded by the sea

II. STORM'S END

And the storm raged across the bliss field
As the moments of time captured the wind
And bent it, pretending it wouldn't matter

The sky burned with daytime
And overpowered the night
As the birds flew higher
Almost out of sight

The quiet lingered in the wake
Of the struggle ended
When the pain had gone away

And the child stood
With tears in his eyes
In love with the day
And the wind that won
In love with the fire
Of the sun

III. MAGIC

Not far from me
Decked in light
Glowing with warmth
The spirit kingdom
Of all
Lives
Forever close
Forever
Strong

Sometimes
Not often
Not enough
But oh
For a moment
I grow flowers
With my hands
And dance
On wings
Uplifted
With all beauty
Mine
As I enter
The kingdom
Of All, and AM

I. Two Friends

From *As Time Stops To Rest* (Song Cycle)

Dedicated to Susan Jordan

Amy Gordon

Words by Susan Jordan

Peacefully ♩ = 90

pp

pedal liberally

sim. (rolled chords)

The piano introduction consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The music is marked 'Peacefully' with a tempo of ♩ = 90. The first staff is marked *pp* and includes the instruction 'pedal liberally'. The second staff is marked *sim. (rolled chords)*. The music features a steady accompaniment of chords and moving lines.

7

Tenor solo *pp*

8

The sun touched the wait - ing air. _____ As wind and

pp

(8va)

This system contains the first line of the song. It features a tenor solo line starting at measure 7, marked *pp*. The lyrics are: "The sun touched the wait - ing air. _____ As wind and". Below the vocal line is the piano accompaniment, marked *pp* and *(8va)*. The piano part continues with a similar accompaniment to the introduction.

13

8

o - - - cean sounds com - bined with gulls laugh - ing o - ver - head. _____

mp

f

f

(8va)

This system contains the second line of the song. It features a vocal line starting at measure 13, marked *mp* and *f*. The lyrics are: "o - - - cean sounds com - bined with gulls laugh - ing o - ver - head. _____". Below the vocal line is the piano accompaniment, marked *f* and *(8va)*. The piano part features a more active accompaniment with some chords marked *f*.

I. Two Friends (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

18

pp

Pno.

(8va)

pp *f* *pp*

3

loco

A

24

mp

S

Warmth and hap - pi - ness int - er - mixed to for - mmm

mp

A

Warmth and hap - pi - ness in - ter - mixed to for - mmm

tutti mp

T

Warmth and hap - pi - ness in - ter - mixed to for - mmm

mp

B

Warmth and hap - pi - ness for - mmm

Pno.

mp

I. Two Friends (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

28

S *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
Warmth and hap - pi - ness form an af - ter - noon

A *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
Warmth and hap - pi - ness form an af - ter - noon

T *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
Warmth and hap - pi - ness form an af - ter - noon

B *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
form an af - ter - noon

Pno. *f* *mp* *f*

32

S *rallentando* *pp*
shared by two close friends.

A *pp*
shared by two close friends.

T *pp*
shared by two close friends.

B *pp*
shared by two close friends.

Pno. *rallentando* *pp*

I. Two Friends (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

35 *a tempo*

Pno.

B 39 *mp* *pp*

S So close we missed the pass - ing of time. So

A So close we missed the pass - ing of time. So

Pno. *mf* *mp*

44 *mf*

S touched by our friend - ship so ea - ger to com - mu - ni - cate.

A touched by our friend - ship so ea - ger to com - mu - ni - cate.

T *mf* The

B *mf* The

Pno. *mf* *pp* *8va*

I. Two Friends (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

C
48

S *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
mo - ments in life that freeze and hold still

A *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
mo - ments in life that freeze and hold still

T *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
mo - ments in life that freeze and hold still

B *fp* *f* *fp* *f*
mo - ments in life that freeze and hold still

Pno. *p* *f* *sim.*
8va *8va* *8va*

52

S *f* *p*
caught in the ma - gic of true re - a - li - ty

A *f* *p*
caught in the ma - gic of true re - a - li - ty

T *fp*
caught

B *f*
Caught

Pno. *non-rolled* *ff*
8vb *loco*

T1 and T2 on top notes *fp*
B1 on bottom note

B2 only *f*

I. Two Friends (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

D

57

S *fp* caught tru - ly con - scious *f*

A *fp* caught tru - ly con - scious *f*

T *mf* tru - ly con - scious *fp* caught

B Caught

Pno. *8vb* loco

61

S *fp* caught tru - ly con - scious *f* *rubato*

A *fp* caught tru - ly con - scious *f* *mp* tru - ly

T *f* tru - ly con - scious *(Tenors only)*

B *tutti mp* tru - ly

Pno. *8vb* loco *rubato*

I. Two Friends (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

E

65 *a tempo*

S

A

T

B

con - scious of our con - nec - tion and u - nique - ness

con - scious of our con - nec - tion and u - nique - ness

a tempo

Pno. *mp* *sim. (rolled chords)*

69

S

A

T

B

Two friends, two

Two friends, two

Two friends, two

Two friends, two

Pno.

I. Two Friends (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

74

S
friends sur - round - ed by the sea. *f* *n*

A
friends sur - round - ed by the sea. *f* *n*

T
friends sur - round - ed by the sea. *f* *n*

B
friends sur - round - ed by the sea. *f* *n*

Pno.

79

Pno. *mp* *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

83

Pno. *rit.* *pp* *ppp*

8vb

II. Storm's End

From *As Time Stops To Rest* (Song Cycle)

Dedicated to Susan Jordan

Amy Gordon

Words by Susan Jordan

In a Flurry ♩.=140

Tenor

Bass

f

And the

f

And the

In a Flurry ♩.=140

Piano

f

T

8 storm raged a - cross the bliss

B

storm raged a - cross the bliss

Pno.

5

II. Storm's End (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

9 *fp* *ff*

T
8 field

B
field as the

Pno. *p* *ff*

13 *mf*

T
8 as the mo - ments of time

B
mo - ments of time cap - tured the

Pno. *mf*

17 *mf* *pp*

T
8 cap - tured the wind.

B
wind. and

Pno. *ff* *8va*

21 *f*

T and bent it,

B bent it, pre -

Pno. *p*

25

T pre - ten - ding it would - n't mat - ter.

B ten - ding it would - - n't mat - ter.

Pno.

8va *molto accel.* *loco*

30 *pp* like raindrops *sim.*

Pno.

36 *a tempo*

Pno. *mf* *ff*

A

43 *mp* **Spaciously** ♩=100

S The sky burned with day - time. and o - ver -

A The sky burned with day - time. and o - ver -

T The sky burned with day - time. and o - ver -

B The sky burned with day - time. and o - ver -

Pno. *pp*

49 *f* *mp*

S pow - ered the night as the birds flew high - er -

A pow - ered the night as the birds flew high - er -

T pow - ered the night as the birds flew

B pow - ered the night as the birds flew

Pno. *mp*

54

S al - most out of sight. *pp*

A al - most out of sight. *pp*

T high - er al - most out of sight. *pp*

B high - er al - most out of sight. *pp*

Pno. *mf* loco *p* loco

59

S

A

T

B

molto rit.

Pno. *pp* *mf* *molto rit. loco*

II. Storm's End (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

B With quiet motion ♩.=104

63

S *pp*
The

A *pp*
The

Pno. *p*
With quiet motion ♩.=104

67

S
qui - et ling - ered in the

A
qui - et ling - ered in the

Pno. *pp*

71

S
wake

A
wake
gva -----
loco

Pno.

II. Storm's End (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

75

S

of the strug - gle end - ed

A

strug - gle end - ed

Pno.

p

sva

80

S

when the pain

A

when the pain had gone a -

Pno.

mp

mf

mf

85

S

had gone a - way

A

way

Pno.

p

pp rit.

pp

rit.

II. Storm's End (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

C Peacefully ♩ = 90

91 *mp*

S And the child stood with tears in his eyes in

A And the child stood with tears in his eyes in

T And the child stood with tears in his eyes in

B And the child stood with tears in his eyes in

Pno. *pp* *mp*

95 *div. f* *unis. mp*

S love with the day and the wind that

A love with the day and the wind that

T love with the day and the wind that

B love with the day and the wind that

Pno. *f* *p*

II. Storm's End (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

99

S won, in love with the fire *div. ff*

A won, in love with the fire *div. ff*

T won, in love with the fire *ff*

B won, in love with the fire *div. ff*

Pno.

103

S of the sun. (nnn) *pp*

A of the sun. (nnn) *pp*

T of the sun. (nnn) *pp*

B *unis.* of the sun. (nnn) *pp*

Pno.

loco

103

II. Storm's End (from *As Time Stops To Rest*)

Pno.

107 *mp* *rit.* *loco*

f *mp* *pp*

8va

8vb-

III. Magic

From *As Time Stops To Rest* (Song Cycle)

Dedicated to Susan Jordan

Amy Gordon

Words by Susan Jordan

Warmly ♩ = 76

Soprano

Alto *mp*

Tenor *mp*

Bass

Not far, not far from me, not far, not far, —

Not far, not far from me, not

6

S *mp*

A

T

B

Not far, not far from me —

not far, not far, —

far, not far, not far, —

III. Magic (From As Time Stops to Rest)

9

S *fp* not far, not far,

A not far, not far,

T not far, not far,

B *mp* Not far from me, not far from

12

S *fp* not far, not far from me, *f*

A *fp* not far, not far from me, *f*

T *fp* not far, not far from me, *f*

B *mf* me, not far from me, *f*

A Slower ♩ = 56

15

S *mf* Not far from me, decked in light, glow-ing with warmth, the *mp*

A *mf* Not far from me, decked in light, glow-ing with warmth, the *mp*

T *mf* Not far from me, decked in light, glow-ing with warmth, the *mp*

B *mf* Not far from me, decked in light, glow-ing with warmth, the *mp*

III. Magic (From As Time Stops to Rest)

Warmly ♩ = 76

19

S *mf* spi - rit king-dom of all lives *p*

A *mf* spi - rit king-dom of all lives for -

T *mf* spi - rit king-dom of all

B *mf* spi - rit king-dom of all lives *p*

23

S *mp* Not far from me,

A *mp* e - ver, for - e - ver close, lives for - e - ver,

T *p* lives for - e - ver, for - e - ver close, *mp* lives for - e - ver,

B *mp* Not far from me,

26

S *mf* not far from me, *rit.* *f* not far from

A for - e - ver strong. *mf* Not far, *f* not far from

T for - e - ver strong. *mf* Not far, *f* not far from

B *mf* not far from me, *f* not far from

III. Magic (From As Time Stops to Rest)

B At Peace ♩ = 84

30 *p* *Sop. solo mp*

S me. Not far from me.

A me.

T me.

B me.

Pno. *mp* Lyrical and flowing
With pedal

33

S

A

T

B

Pno.

36 *tutti* *fp* *mf* *mp*

S Some-times, some-times, not of - ten,

A Some-times, some-times, not of - ten,

T 8 Some-times, some-times, not

B Some-times, some-times, not

Pno.

39 *mf* *p* *fp* *mf*

S not e - nough, not e - nough,

A *mf* *sub p* *fp* *mf*
not e - nough, not e - nough,

T 8 *mf* *sub p* *fp* *mf*
of - ten, not e - nough, not e - nough,

B *mf* *sub p* *fp* *mf*
of - ten, not e - nough, not e - nough,

Pno. *sub p*

42

S *fp*
some-times,

A *fp*
some-times,

T *fp*
some-times,

B *fp*
some-times,

Pno. *mp* *p*

C

45

S *mp*
But oh,

A *mp*
But oh,

T *mp*
But oh,

B *mp*
But oh,

Pno. *mp*

The musical score is arranged in systems. The first system (measures 48-50) includes vocal parts for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B), and a piano (Pno.) part. The vocal parts feature lyrics: "But oh," in measure 48 and "but oh!" in measure 50. The piano part includes a trill in measure 48 and a *8vb* marking in measure 50. Dynamics range from *mp* to *ff*. The second system (measures 50-52) continues the vocal and piano parts, with the piano part reaching a *ff* dynamic. The vocal parts end with a fermata in measure 52. The piano part includes a *8vb* marking in measure 50.

III. Magic (From As Time Stops to Rest)

26
D

53

S
A
T
B

For a mo - ment I grow flo - wers,
For a mo - ment I grow flo - wers
For a mo - ment I grow flo - wers
For a mo - ment I grow flo - wers

Pno.

(8vb)

56

S
A
T
B

grow flo - wers with my hands,
grow flo - wers with my hands,
grow flo - wers with my hands,
grow flo - wers with my hands,

Pno.

(8vb)

Hushed ♩ = 76 *p*

58

S
grow flo - wers with my hands,

A
flo - wers with my hands,

T
flo - wers with my hands,

B
flo - wers with my hands,

E

62 *Sop. solo mf*

sopranos on top note
altos on bottom note

S
and dance on wings up - lift - ed

A
p
Grow flo - wers,

T
p
Grow flo - wers,

B
p
Grow flo - wers,

66 *2 sopranos f*

with all beau - ty, mine

mp Grow flowers,

mp Grow flowers,

mp Grow flowers,

70 *Sop. solo p*

as I en - ter, en - ter the

pp mine,

pp mine,

pp mine,

F

At Peace ♩ = 84

Sop. tutti *fp* *mf*

Altos tutti *fp* *mf*

fp *mf*

fp *mf*

At Peace ♩ = 84

mp
loco

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

king - dom,

As I

As I

As I

As I

en - ter

the king - dom

of

en - ter

the king - dom

en - ter

the king - dom

en - ter

the king - dom

80

S *sub p* *fp* *mf*
all, king-dom of all,

A *sub p* *fp* *mf*
king-dom of all, king-dom of all,

T *sub p* *fp* *mf*
king-dom of all, king-dom of all,

B *sub p* *fp* *mf*
king-dom of all, king-dom of all,

Pno. *sub p*
80

82

S *fp* *mp*
of all, king-dom of all,

A *mp*
of all, of all

T *mp*
of all, of

B *mp*
king-dom of all,

Pno. *mp*
82

85 G *fp* <>>

S *fp* <>> As I

A *fp* <>> As I

T *fp* <>> As I

B *fp* <>> As I

all,

Pno. *mp*

85

8^{vb}-----

88 *fp* <>> *molto rit.* *f*

S en - ter, en - ter the king-dom of all and

A *fp* <>> *f* en - ter, en - ter the king-dom of all and

T *fp* <>> *f* en - ter, en - ter the king-dom of all and

B *fp* <>> *f* en - ter, en - ter the king-dom of all and

Pno. *molto rit.* *p*

88

(8^{vb})-----

a tempo
mp

S
A
T
B

AM. (mm)

a tempo
mp
loco

Pno.

94

p

Pno.

molto rit.
a tempo

98

p
pp
ppp

g^{vb}
loco