Evening Music: 
Five Sarton Poems

~ for SATB chorus, a cappella ~

Evening Music
The Clavichord
Eine Kleine Snailmusik
Girl With 'Cello
Song

Music by Christopher J. Hoh

Texts by May Sarton
Evening Music

We enter this evening as we enter a quartet.
Listening again for its particular note
The interval where all seems possible,
Order within time when action is suspended
And we are pure in heart, perfect in will.
We enter the evening whole and well-defended
But at the quick of self, intense detachment
That is a point of burning far from passion —
And this, we know, is what we always meant
And even love must learn it in some fashion,
To move like formal music through the heart,
To be achieved like some high difficult art.

We enter the evening as we enter a quartet
Listening again for its particular note
Which is your note, perhaps, your special gift,
A detached joy that flowers and makes bloom
The longest silence in the silent room —
And there would be no music if you left.

The Clavichord

She keeps her clavichord
As others keep delight, too light
To breathe, the secret word
No lover ever heard
Where the pure spirit lives
And garlands weaves.

To make the pure notes sigh
(Not of a human grief, too brief)
A sigh of such fragility
Her fingers' sweet ability
Must hold the horizontal line
In the stern power of design.

The secret breathed within
And never spoken, woken
By music; the garlands in
Her hands no one has seen.
She wreathes the air with green
And weaves the stillness in.
Eine Kleine Snailmusik

What soothes the angry snail?
What's music to his horn?
For the "Sonata Appassionata,"
He shows scorn,
And Handel
Makes the frail snail
Quail,
While Prokofieff
Gets no laugh,
And Tchaikovsky, I fear,
No tear.
Piano, pipe, and harp,
Dulcet or shrill,
Flat or sharp,
Indoors or in the garden,
Are willy-nilly
Silly
To the reserved, slow,
Sensitive
Snail,
Who prefers to live
Glissandissimo,
Pianissimo.

Girl With 'Cello

There had been no such music here until
A girl came in from falling dark and snow
To bring into this house her glowing 'cello
As if some silent, magic animal.

She sat, head bent, her long hair all aspill
Over the breathing wood, and drew the bow.
There had been no such music here until
A girl came in from falling dark and snow.

And she drew out that sound so like a wail,
A rich, dark suffering joy, as if to show
All that a wrist holds and that fingers know
When they caress a magic animal.
There had been no such music here until
A girl came in from falling dark and snow.
Song

Now let us honor with violin and flute
A woman set so deeply in devotion
That three times blasted to the root
Still she grew green and poured strength out.

Still she stood fair, providing the cool shade,
Compassion, the thousand leaves of mercy,
The cherishing green hope. Still like a tree she stood,
Clear comfort in the town and all the neighborhood.

Pure as the tree is pure, young
As the tree forever young, magnanimous
And natural, sweetly serving: for her the song,
For her the flute sound and the violin be strung.

For her all love, all praise,
All honor, as for trees
In the hot, summer days.

May Sarton

For permission to perform these pieces in public, contact the following:

RUSSELL & VOLKENING
50 West 29th St. #7E
New York, NY 10001
Phone: (212) 684-6050
Fax: (212) 889-3026
We enter this ev'n ing as we enter a quartet, list'ning again for its particular note, the interval where all seems possible, order within time when action is sus-

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pen-ded, and we are pure in heart, perfect in will, pure in heart, and perfect in

will. We en-ter the ev-'ning

We en-ter the ev-'ning whole and

whole and well de-fend-ed but at the quick of

well de-fend-ed
self, intense detachment that is a point of burning

far from passion, (and this we know) is what we always

meant, and even love must learn it in some

fashion, to move like formal music

* Divide voices relatively evenly among the six parts.
through the heart, to be achieved like some high

difficult art. We enter this
ev'ning as we enter a quartet, list'n ing a-

gain for its particular note, which is
your note, perhaps, your special gift,

a detached joy that flowers and makes

bloom the longest silence in the

silent room — and there would be no —
and there would
mu-sic if you left; and there would be no

be no music, no music if
and there would be no music, no

if you, if you left. a tempo
you, if you left. We
music, no music if you left.
poco rit.

en-ter list'n-ing, a-gain.
The Clavichord

May Sarton

Christopher J. Hoh

* Divide voices relatively evenly among the three upper parts.

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as o-thers keep de-light, digh, digh, digh, digh, digh, too

as o-thers keep de-light, digh, digh, digh, digh, digh, too

as o-thers keep de-light, too

as o-thers keep de-light, too

light, too light to breathe the se-cret word, dur, dur, dur,

light, too light to breathe the se-cret word, dur, dur, dur,

light to breathe the se-cret_____

light to breathe the se-cret

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dur, dur, dur, no lover, lover ever
dur, dur, dur, no lover, lover ever
word, no lover ever
word, no lover ever
heard, dur, dur, where the pure spirit lives, ziv, ziv, ziv,
heard, dur, dur, where the pure spirit lives, ziv, ziv, ziv,
heard
heard
heard
heard
gar-lands weaves, gar-lands weaves.

div.

weaves.

unis.

pure notes sigh, sigh

To make the pure notes sigh, pure sigh, digh, digh, digh, digh,

To make the pure notes sigh, sigh

To make the pure notes sigh, sigh,

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not grief, too
not of a human grief, too
not of a human grief, too
not of a human grief, too
brief, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
b brief, dee, a sigh of such fragility,
dee, dee, dee, her fingers sweet agility,

gil - i - ty, her fingers

dah-dee-dah-dee-dah-dee, dah-dee, dee-dee-dee, fingers must hold,
sweet agility must hold,
hold the horizontal line, in the stern
hold the horizontal line, in the stern
hold the line, in the stern

power of design, dign, dign, dign, of design.
power of design, dign, dign, dign, of design.

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The secret breathed within, din, din, din, din, din, din, din,

The secret breathed within, din, din, din, din, din, din, din,

The secret breathed within,

and never spoken, gen, gen, gen, gen, gen, gen, but

and never spoken, gen, gen, gen, gen, gen, gen, but

and never spoken,

but
wo - ken by mu - sic, gee, gee, gee, gee, gee,
wo - ken by mu - sic, gee, gee, gee, gee, gee,
wo - ken by mus - ic, the gar - lands
wo - ken by mus - ic, the gar - lands

the gar - lands in her hands no one has
the gar - lands in her hands no one has

in her hands no one has
in her hands no one has

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seen, dee, deen. She wreathes the air with

seen, dee, deen. She wreathes the air with

seen.

seen.

seen.

green, dee, deen, and weaves,

green, dee, deen, and weaves,

She wreathes the air with green, and

She wreathes the air with green, and

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dah-dee-dah-dee-dah-dee, dah-dee-dee-dah,

she wreathes the air and

weaves,
she wreathes and

weaves, she wreathes and

weaves, she wreathes and

weaves, she wreathes and

weaves the stillness, stillness in.

she weaves the stillness in, stillness in.

weaves the stillness in, stillness in.

weaves the stillness in.
Eine Kleine Snailmusik

Sopr.

Lugubriously  mp

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Rehsl.  Acc.

Lugubriously  \( \frac{d}{60} \)

What sooths the angry snail?  And what's music

What sooths the angry snail?  What's music

What sooths the angry snail?  What's music

* Emphasize the final note with a moderate glissando, slight accent, and pronounced diphthong.

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to his horn? For the 'Sonata Appassionata,' he shows scorn, shows scorn; And Handel makes the frail snail
quail, quail; Han-del makes the frail snail quail; I fear, no tear, no tear; While Pro-ko-fi-eff gets no laugh, and Tchai-kov-sky, I fear, no tear, no tear; 

quail; Han-del makes the frail snail quail; quail, the frail snail quail; quail; quail.
While Pro-kofeff gets no laugh, and Tchaikovsky, I fear, no tear; Tchaikovsky no tear, I fear, Pro-kofeff

While Pro-kofeff gets no laugh, I fear, Pro-kofeff

no tear, Tchaikovsky, no tear, Pro-kofeff, Tchaikovsky, no tear, Pro-kofeff, Tchaikovsky, no tear, Pro-kofeff, and Tchaikovsky, I fear,
As at first
gets no laugh. Tchaikov-sky, no tear. Piano,
no__  


As at first


As at first


pipe. and harp. dul-cet or shrill, flat or sharp, ... or


pipe. and harp. dul-cet or shrill, flat or sharp, in-doors,


pipe. and harp. dul-cet or shrill, flat or sharp, in-doors or


pipe. and harp. dul-cet or shrill, flat or sharp, in-doors or
in the garden, are wil-ly...

in the garden, ...nil-ly,

in the gar- den, sil-ly,

in the gar- den:

*snail,

*snail,

sil-ly,____________________ wil-ly-nil-ly sil-ly to the re-served,

wil-ly...____________________ wil-ly-nil-ly sil-ly to the re-served,

...nil-ly;____________________ wil-ly-nil-ly sil-ly to the re-served,

...*snail,____________________ *snail;____________________ to the re-served,

*snail,____________________ *snail;____________________

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slow, sen-si-tive snail, who pre-fers to live
glis-san-dis-si-mo, pi-an-i-si-mo.
For Kerry Krebill and Musikanten,  
Happy 20th Anniversary!

Girl With 'Cello

May Sarton                      Christopher J. Hoh

Sopr.  Slow, expressive  mp

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Rehsl. Acc.

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to bring into this house her glowing 'cello as if some

oh, oh, glowing 'cello,

silent, magic animal.

Oh, oh, she  

silent, magic animal.

She.

silent, magic animal.

Oh, she
* Divide voices relatively evenly among the three parts.
* Divide voices evenly among the three parts.
til a girl came in from falling dark and snow,

'til a girl came in from falling dark and snow.

'til a girl came in from falling dark and snow.

oh. And she drew out that sound, a wail, a

And she drew out that sound, so like a wail, a

And she drew out that sound, so like a wail, a

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rich, dark suffering joy, as if to show... all

a wrist holds and fingers know, when they caress, car-

* Divide voices relatively evenly among the six parts.
40

res... a mag-ic an-i-mal...
unis. f

45

til a girl, in from fall-ing
decr.

- un-til a girl came in from fall-ing dark, dark-
decr.
and snow; drew the bow,
and snow; drew the bow, fingers know,

and snow.

and snow.

oh, oh, her glowing 'cello.

oh, 'cello.
Song (Now Let Us Honor)

May Sarton
Christopher J. Hoh

Now let us honor with violin and flute,

Marchlike

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now honor

and flute a woman set so

A woman set so

devo tion that, three times blast ed

devo tion that, three times blast ed, blast -
dee ply in devo tion that, three times blast ed,
dee ply in devo tion that, three times blast ed,
to the root,
ed to the root, still she grew green,
to the root, still she grew green,
blast-ed to the root, still she grew
still she grew green and poured strength
still she grew green and poured strength
still she grew green and poured strength
green and poured strength
* Divide voices relatively evenly among the three parts.
(-cy.) the cherish-ing green hope.

cy, the cherish-ing green hope.

* Divide voices relatively evenly among the three parts.

Still like a

Still like a

Clear comfort.

Clear comfort.

tree she stood, clear comfort in the

tree she stood, clear comfort in
town and all the neighborhood; 

the town and all the neighborhood; 

still she stood, still she stood, still she stood, still she stood, still she stood,
young as the tree for ev er young, mag
unis, still she stood, still as the tree for ev er young, mag
unis, still she stood, still as the tree for ev er young, mag
unis. nan-i-mous and nat-u-ral, sweet-ly serv-ing:
nan-i-mous and nat-u-ral, sweet-ly serv-ing:
nan-i-mous and nat-u-ral, sweet-ly serv-ing:
  serv-ing: For
For her the song,

For her the song, for her the flute sound

For her the song, for her the flute sound and the violin

For her the flute sound, flute sound and the violin

for her the flute sound

and the violin, the violin be

and the violin be strung,
and the violin be strung. For her all, all

and the violin be strung. For her all, all

strung, the violin be strung, love, all

strung, the violin be strung, love, all

praise, all honor her, praise, all honor her, praise, all honor her, as for praise, all honor her, as for

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* Divide voices relatively evenly among the six parts.