JULIANA HALL

THE MYSTIC TRUMPETER

Setting for Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, or Tenor and Piano

Based on the Poem by Walt Whitman

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THE MYSTIC TRUMPETER

was written for tenor Anthony Dean Griffey, who premiered it with pianist Warren Jones on Thursday, August 10, 2023 at the Source Song Festival in Minneapolis, Minnesota. My love and gratitude to Tony and Warren for their sterling performance, and to Source Song Festival Artistic Director Clara Osowski for hosting the premiere of this piece.

—Juliana Hall

Cover design by David Sims.



TEXT

I

Hark! some wild trumpeter—some strange musician, vibrates capricious tunes to-night. I hear thee, trumpeter—I catch thy notes, whirling like a tempest around me, Now in the distance lost.

Π

Come nearer, bodiless one—haply, in thee resounds Some dead composer— That now, ecstatic ghost, close to me bending, Gives out to no one's ears but mine— That I may translate thee.

Ш

Blow, trumpeter, free and clear— A holy calm descends, like dew, upon me, I walk the walks of Paradise, I scent the grass, the moist air, and the roses; Thy song expands my spirit— Floating and basking upon Heaven's lake.

IV

Blow again, trumpeter! Bring the old pageants—show the feudal world. What charm thy music works! the troubadours are singing, Arm'd knights go forth to redress wrongs— I see the tournament— I hear the shouts—the sound of blows and smiting steel: I see the Crusaders' tumultuous armies— Hark! how the cymbals clang! Lo! where the monks walk in advance, bearing the cross on high!

V

Blow again, trumpeter! and for thy theme, *Love*, that is pulse of all—the sustenance and the pang; No other theme but love— Love, that is all the earth to lovers— Love, that is sun and moon and stars; No other thought but Love.

VI

Blow again, trumpeter—conjure war's wild alarums. a shuddering like distant thunder where arm'd men hasten—mid the clouds of dust, the glint of bayonets; the grime-faced cannoniers—I mark the rosy flash amid the smoke—I hear the cracking of the guns: thy fearful music brings every sight of fear, behold the terrible tableaux!

VII

O trumpeter! methinks I am myself the instrument thou playest! Thou melt'st my heart, my brain thy sullen notes send darkness through me; Thou takest away all hope: I see the enslaved, the overthrown, the hurt, the opprest the shame and humiliation of my race— Utter defeat upon me weighs— (Yet Pride colossal stands, Endurance, resolution, to the last.)

VIII

Now, trumpeter, Sing to my soul give me some vision of the future; Give me, for once, its prophecy and joy! O glad, exulting, culminating song! Marches of victory— Hymns to the universal God, from universal Man—all joy! A reborn race appears, a perfect World, all joy! Women and Men, in wisdom, innocence and health— War, sorrow, suffering gone— The ocean fill'd with joy—the atmosphere all joy! Joy! Joy! in freedom, worship, love! Joy in the ecstasy of life! Enough to merely be! Enough to breathe!

Joy! Joy! all over Joy!

There are several contemporaneously published versions of "The Mystic Trumpeter," including an 1872 reprint edition called *As A Strong Bird on Pinions Free*, an 1876 publication called *Two Rivulets*, and an early edition of *Leaves of Grass* published in 1881. However, the text printed above is a gently edited version of the earliest publication of "The Mystic Trumpeter" printed in the first issue of *Kansas Magazine* in February 1872, as it appears online in a photographic facsimile located on the Walt Whitman Archive website at https://whitmanarchive.org/published/periodical/poems/per.00143

The Mystic Trumpeter

for Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, or Tenor and Piano

Walt Whitman



Performance note: A double barline separates each of the eight sections of *The Mystic Trumpeter*. Proceeding from one section to the next, performers may take a very brief pause, if desired, but any pause taken should not be significantly long enough that any section will feel as though it is a separate "song" but, rather, the entire work must be performed so as to feel that it is a single-movement composition comprised of eight connected, cohesive, and related sections.

Text: Adapted from "The Mystic Trumpeter" by Walt Whitman (1819–1892). First published in Kansas Magazine February 1872 (PD).

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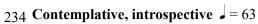


VI

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VII







VIII



