

Commissioning Choir: Northwestern State University Chamber Choir;
Michael John Trotta, Composer; Michael John Trotta, Conductor; Nicholaus B. Cummins, Conductor;
Northwestern State University Chamber Choir, Chorus;
Leah Forsyth, Oboe; Andrej Kurti, Violin 1; Jonathan Andino, Violin 2;
Sofia Tchetchelashvili, Viola; Alonso Restrepo Cardozo, Violoncello

First Performance/Recording Date: March 1, 2017

Recording Engineer: Pat Divietro

This project was made possible by the Lynn Prince Endowed Professorship in Voice.

Total Duration: 30:27

NOTES

Each of the movements of *For a Breath of Ecstasy* chronicles Teasdale's search for solace amidst life's many storms. The tapestry of different vocal forces set against the backdrop of Oboe and Strings reveals moments of yearning, love, joy, and peace. Vivid imagery portrays transcendent moments of solace that are revealed in an individual's relationship to nature and in love.

This work draws texts from *Love Songs*, the anthology of celebrated American poet, Sara Teasdale (1884–1933), and was commissioned to celebrate the centennial of her winning the first Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 1918.

—Michael John Trotta

TEXT

Life has loveliness to sell,
All beautiful and splendid things,
Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
Soaring fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.

Life has loveliness to sell,
Music like a curve of gold,
Scent of pine trees in the rain,
Eyes that love you, arms that hold,
And for your spirit's still delight,
Holy thoughts that star the night.
Spend all you have for loveliness,
Buy it and never count the cost;
For one white singing hour of peace
Count many a year of strife well lost,
And for a breath of ecstasy
Give all you have been, or could be.

Note: These are the texts in their original form. The composer altered them in his settings. See the music for footnotes.

AVAILABLE EDITIONS

For a Breath of Ecstasy complete edition

- 1.3523, Piano/Oboe Choral Score
- 1.3523A, Full Score
- 1.3523B, Oboe Part
- 1.3523C, String Parts

Each movement available separately

- 1. Wealth Enough for Me
1.3524, Choral Score
1.3524A, Full Score
1.3524B, String Parts

- 2. Peace Flows into Me
1.3525, Choral Score
1.3525A, Full Score
1.3525B, String Parts
- 3. Who Gave My Soul to Me
1.3526, Choral Score
1.3526A, Full Score
1.3526B, String Parts
- 4. For You I Am Still
1.3527, Choral Score
1.3527A, Full Score
1.3527B, String Parts

- ➔ 5. **Spend All You Have
on Loveliness**
1.3451, Choral Score
1.3451A, Full Score
1.3451B, String Parts
- 6. And I For You
1.3528, Choral Score
1.3528A, Full Score
1.3528B, String Parts
- 7. Let Me Love
1.3529, Choral Score
1.3529A, Full Score
1.3529B, String Parts

Michael John Trotta (b. 1978)

For biographical information visit: www.mjtrotta.com

Commissioned by the Wando High School Bella Voce Choir, Mary Elizabeth Morton, Director

Spend All You Have On Loveliness

for SSAA Chorus, Oboe, and String Quartet or Piano

Sara Teasdale (1884–1933)
M. J. T., alt.

Michael John Trotta
(ASCAP)

mp ♩ = ca. 72

Oboe

Soprano

Alto

mp ♩ = ca. 72

Piano

Ob.

S

A

be, be. Life** has love-li-ness to

be, be. Life** has love-li-ness to

unis.

N.B.: The composer reordered the second and third paragraphs of the text in his setting.

* The composer inserted this line here.

6

Ob.

S
sell, All beau - ti - ful and splen - did

A
sell, All beau - ti - ful and splen - did

8

Ob. **A**

S
things, Blue waves whit - ened on a

A
things, Blue waves whit - ened on a **A**

10

S
cliff, A* soar - ing fire that sways and

A
cliff, A* soar - ing fire that sways and

* The composer inserted the word "A" here.

12

Ob.

S

sings, *p* And child - - ren's

A

sings, *p* And child - - ren's

p

14

S

fac - es look - ing up,

A

fac - es look - ing up,

cresc. poco a poco

16

Ob.

S

Hold - - ing

A

Hold - - ing

(cresc.)

18

Ob.

S
won - der, won - der like a

A
won - - der, won - der like a

20

Ob.

S
cup. *unis. mf* Spend all you have for love - li - ness, And*

A
cup. *unis. mf* Spend all you have for love - li - ness, And*

B

mf

* The composer omitted the words "Buy it" here.

22

Ob.

S

A

nev - er count the cost; For one white hour* of sing - ing peace Counts**

nev - er count the cost; For one white hour* of sing - ing peace Counts**

24

Ob.

S

A

years of strife well lost, And for a breath of ec - sta - sy Give

years of strife well lost, And for a breath of ec - sta - sy Give

cresc.

27

S

A

all you have been, and*** all

all you have been, and*** all

unis.

(cresc.) *dim.*

* The composer changed the order of the words from “singing hour of peace” to “hour of singing peace” here.


** The composer changed the words from “Count” to “Counts” here.

*** The composer changed the words from “or could be” to “and all you could be” here.

30

Ob. 

S 
all ___ you could be.

A 
unis.
all ___ you could be. _____ Life has ___ love - li - ness to



33

Ob. 

S 
Oo

A 
sell, Mu - sic like a curve of



35

Ob.

S

A

gold, Scent of pine trees in the

37

S

A

Oo Eyes that love you, arms that

rain, Eyes that love you, arms that

39

Ob.

S

A

hold, And for your

hold, And for your

41

S
spi - rit's still de - light,

A
spi - rit's still de - light,

cresc. poco a poco

43

Ob.

S
Ho - - ly

A
Ho - - ly

(cresc.)

45

Ob.

S
thoughts, thoughts that star the

A
thoughts, thoughts that star the

(cresc.)

47

S *unis.* *f*
 night. Spend all you have on lov - li -

A *unis. f*
 night. Spend

50

Ob.

S
 ness, Nev - er count the

A
 all you have for lov - li - ness, And* nev - er count the cost; For

52

Ob.

S
 cost, And

A
 one white hour* of sing - ing peace Counts** years of strife well lost, And

* The composer omitted the words "Buy it" here.

** The composer changed the order of the words from "singing hour of peace" to "hour of singing peace" here.

54 **F**

S for _____ a breath of ec - sta - sy _____ Give all _____ you have

A for _____ a breath of ec - sta - sy _____ Give all _____ you have

cresc.

57

Ob. *unis.*

S been, _____ And* all _____ all _____ you could

A been, _____ And* all _____ all _____ you could *unis.*

dim.

60 [Cue-sized note is an *ossia*]

Ob. *mp*

S be,

A be,

(dim.) *mp*

* The composer changed the words from "Count" to "Counts" here.

62

Ob.

S

A

mp

all you could be,

mp

all you could be,

64

Ob.

S

A

rit.

p

be.

be.

rit.

p

pp