

Program and/or Performance Notes

Sketches for *Child of Song* (for soprano and piano) date back to January 2000. My good friends Pam and John Sebastian had recently lost their son, Bear (a student of mine), to a tragic motorcycle accident. A few years later, I watched with horror the images of families and loss in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. I was moved to take up the idea again of a lament, specifically for that most unnatural of acts – when parents must bury their children.

When I considered the addition of a chorus to the original piece, I was reminded of choral literature which expressed the connection of mother and child. For me, the most poignant expression of this is found in the fifth movement of Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, where the soprano soloist speaks as a motherly voice from heaven, singing, "You have had sorrow. I will comfort you; I will see you again." In *Child of Song*, the roles are inverted: the soprano sings as a mother who has lost her child and asks that the spirit of her child be with her in her last hour. It is the chorus, quoting from Brahms' *Requiem*, that ethereally speaks the words from the departed child, recognizing the parents' grief and offering a calm assurance of comfort, as from a mother, that they shall see each other again.

Child of Song is a small portrait of the tragedy that occurs when a parent loses a child. It is humbly offered to all who have suffered the untimely loss of a loved one.

—Steven Sametz

Child of Song

Child of song,
oh Child of prayer,
Child I held,
held now beyond all care.
Child I held,
oh hold me now.
Child age is not for you,
Child of my song;
Oh my Child keep trust with me
Ah, until we sing again, my Child.
Child that I held
sing me your song
cradle me

now in my final hour.
Child of mine,
Child I held,
Child of Song
Hold me now
Ah, until we sing again, my Child!
Child of song,
oh, Child of prayer,
Child I held,
oh, hold me now.

—Steven Sametz

*Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit,
Ich will euch trösten,
wie einen seine Mutter tröstet
Ich will euch wieder sehen.*

You have now only sorrow;
I shall comfort you
as one is comforted by his mother.
I will see you once more.

—Texts used in Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*
(John 16:22 and Isaiah 66:13)

Publisher's Notes

Instrumentation

Alto Flute
Clarinet in B \flat
Horn in F
Percussion (one player)
 Marimba
 Vibraphone
 Suspended cymbal
 Triangle
Harp

Duration: 7 minutes

The full score (Catalog No. 6933) and parts (Catalog No. 6934) are available from the publisher.

for John and Pam Sebastian
dedicated to the victims of Hurricane Katrina

Child of Song

for Soprano Solo, SATB Chorus and Chamber Ensemble

Steven Sametz;

Steven Sametz

John 16:22 and Isaiah 66:13

Moderato ♩ = 96

Soprano Solo

Piano

p *sempre legato e tranquillo*

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * (ped. simile)

6

of song, oh Child of

11

prayer, Child I held,

16

held now be-yond all care.

Sopranos pp espr.
(1/2 on words; 1/2 humming)

21

Chorus

Ihr _____ habt _____ nun _____

Pno.

26

Sop. Solo

Child _____ I

(Sopranos)

Chorus

Trau - - - - rig - - - - keit, _____

Pno.

A *cresc. poco a poco*

cresc. poco a poco

31

Sop. Solo

held, _____ oh hold _____ me now. _____

Pno.

mf

mf loco

8va

36

Sop. Solo

Chorus (Sopranos)

languidly

Trau - - - - rig - keit,

Pno.

40 (Sopranos)

Trau - rig - keit,

Pno.

44 **B** ♩ = 120

Sop. Solo

Child age is not for

poch. rall.

Pno.

48 ♩ = ♩ (♩ = 80) *f*

you, Child of my song; Oh my Child keep trust with me

♩ = ♩ (♩ = 80)

Pno.

51 $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (= 80)$ $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (\text{♩} = 60)$ **C** $\text{♩} = 60$

mp

Ah — un - til we sing a - gain, my Child.

ff *p* *ppp*

54 *rall.*

Child that I held — sing me your song —

simile *p espr.* *rall.*

57 $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (= 60)$ $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (\text{♩} = 40)$ **D** $\text{♩} = 60$

p

cra - dle me — now in my fi - nal hour.

$\text{♩} = \text{♩} (= 60)$ $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (\text{♩} = 40)$ $\text{♩} = 60$

slow roll *pp like a reverie*

61

Child _____ of

ghostly

64

mine, Child _____ I held,

Sva

67

Sop. Solo

Child _____ of Song

S
A

Chorus

p espr. da lontano

Ich will, _____ Ich

T
B

p espr. da lontano

Ich will - euch - trö - sten,

Pno.

p espr. da lontano
 Ich will euch trö - sten

70

Chorus
 will euch trö - sten, trö - sten,

Tenor 1 Ich will euch trö - sten,

Baritone
 ich will euch trö - sten, Tenor 2 trö - sten

Pno.

Sop. Solo
 Hold me now Ah,

73

Pno.

un - til we sing a - gain, my Child!

77

per piacere

E ♩ = 92

brief

mp *p* *pp*

Pno.

82 *pp*

Child of song, oh

88

Sop. Solo
S
A
Chorus
T
B
Pno.

Child of prayer, Child

ppp

wie ei-nen sei-ne Mut-ter trö - stet,

wie ei-nen sei-ne Mut-ter trö - - stet,

93

I held, oh, hold

trö - stet,

trö - stet

trö - - stet, trö - - stet, trö - -

98 *poco rall.* **F** ♩ = 52

me

pp Ich will euch wie - der se - hen,

poco rall. Ich will euch wie - der se - hen,

pp stet, Ich will euch trö - sten, wie - der se - hen,

♩ = 52

poco rall.

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

102 *pp* *rall.*

hold me now.

pppp *rall.*

trö - sten. (n)

pppp *rall.*

trö - sten. (n)

p *pp* *rall.* *pppp*

ppp