

Sure On This Shining Night

James Agee

Morten Lauridsen

Flowing, tempo.rubato (♩ = ca. 72) *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Piano *p espressivo*

4 *rit.* *a tempo mp* Sure on this shin - ing

B *mp* Sure on this shin - ing

rit. *a tempo*

7 *poco rit.* night of star-made shad-ows round, a kind-ness must watch for me this side the ground on this

night of star-made shad-ows round, kind-ness must watch for me this side the ground, on this *poco rit.*

*Omit if the low As are out of range.

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10 *a tempo* *rit. a tempo*

shin - - - ing night, this shin - -

shin - - - ing night, this shin - -

a tempo *rit. a tempo*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

13 *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*

- - - ing night.

- - - ing night.

rit. *a tempo* *rit.*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

16 **B** *a tempo* *mp*

S Sure on this shin-ing night of star-made shad-ows round, & kind-ness must watch for me this

A Sure on this shin-ing night of star-made shad-ows round, & kind-ness must watch for me this

T Sure on this shin-ing night, sure on this shin - - - ing.

B Sure on this shin-ing

B *a tempo*

mp *mp* *mp* *mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

25

T *mp* The late year lies —

B *mp* The late year lies —

The late year lies —

Ped. *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

28

(no breath)

down the north, All — is healed, all — is health. High

down the north, All — is healed, all — is health. High

Ped. *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

31

S *mp* The late year lies — down the north, All — is

A *mp* The late year lies — down the north, All — is

T sum-mer holds the earth. Hearts all whole. All — is healed, —

B sum-mer holds the earth. Hearts all whole. All — is healed, —

Ped. *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

34 (no breath) *mf*

healed, _____ all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. Hearts all

healed, _____ all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. Hearts all

_____ all is health, all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. Hearts all

_____ all is health, all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. Hearts all

mf

Red Red Red Red Red

37 *meno mosso* *rit.* **D** *a tempo* *f*

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this shin - ing,

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this

meno mosso *rit.* **D** *a tempo* *f*

Red Red

40

shin - ing night, sure on this shin -

shin - ing night, sure on this shin -

shin - ing night, sure on this shin -

shin - ing night, sure on this shin -

rit. *ff* a tempo

Red. Red. Red. Red. Red.

43

ing night. I weep for won-der wan-d'ring far a - lone

ing night. I weep a - lone

ing night. I weep for won-der wan-d'ring far a - lone

ing night. I weep a - lone

rit. *mp* a tempo *p*

Red. Red. Red. Red. Red.

46 *meno mosso rit.* *molto rit. molto lunga* **E** *Molto meno mosso, with a sense of wonder* *ppp hushed*

shad - ows on the stars. Sure on this

shad - ows on the stars.

shad - ows on the stars.

shad - ows on the stars. *ppp hushed* Sure on this shin-ing

meno mosso rit. *molto rit. molto lunga (no break)* **E** *Molto meno mosso, with a sense of wonder* *ppp*

Red. Red. Red. Red.

49

shin-ing night, this shin - ing night, on this

ppp hushed

Sure on this shin - ing night, on this

ppp hushed

Sure on this shin-ing night, on this

night of star-made shadows round, kind-ness must watch for me this side the ground, on this

Red. Red. Red. Red. Red.

*Omit if the low As are out of range.

52

shin - - - ing night, this shin - - -

shin - - - ing night, this shin - - -

shin - - - ing night, this shin - - -

shin - - - ing night, this shin - - -

56

rit.

F *Meno mosso*

ing night, ing night, ing night, ing night,

ing night, ing night, ing night, ing night,

rit.

F *Meno mosso*

p

Ped. *Ped.*

59 *meno mosso* *rit.* *molto meno mosso*

p sure on this shin - ing

p sure on this shin - ing

p sure on this shin - ing

p sure on this shin - ing

meno mosso *rit.* *molto meno mosso*

62 *Tempo I* *rit.* *molto rit.* *lunga*

night.

night.

night.

night.

Tempo I *rit.* *molto rit.* *lunga*

mp *p*

Ped. *Ped.* *Ped.*

(for Jama)
(ca. 4'45")

Sure On This Shining Night

Sure on this shining night
Of starmade shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wand'ring far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

—James Agee

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From *Nocturnes*, The American Choral Directors Association
2005 Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission

Premiere performance of the *Nocturnes* at the 2005 ACDA National Convention by the
Donald Brinegar Singers and Morten Lauridsen, piano

I originally composed *Sure On This Shining Night* as the third movement for my choral cycle *Nocturnes* on poems by Rilke, Neruda and Agee. I set the verse very much like a song from the American musical theater stage and it should be sung in that manner. The first three *Nocturnes*—*Sa Nuit d'Été* (R.M. Rilke), *Soneto de la Noche* (Pablo Neruda) and *Sure On This Shining Night*—may be performed either separately or as a cycle (in that order and including the *Epilogue*). The *Epilogue: Voici le soir*, is only to be performed if the entire cycle is done, following *Sure On This Shining Night*. In that case, the final chord of *Sure On This Shining Night* is held with a fermata and then the chorus begins the *Epilogue* without a break between these two movements.

In addition to the original SATB/piano and TTBB/piano versions, *Sure On This Shining Night* is also available as a duet for soprano/mezzo-soprano and tenor/baritone with piano and as a solo song for baritone and piano combined with Dana Gioia's "Prayer," published by Peermusic as "Two Songs on American Poems." The complete *Nocturnes* are recorded on *Sure On This Shining Night - Voce Sings Lauridsen* and on *Lauridsen - Mid-Winter Songs* by The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists, both accompanied by the composer at the piano.

—Morten Lauridsen

The music of Morten Lauridsen, Distinguished Professor of Composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, occupies a permanent place in the standard vocal repertoire of the Twenty-First Century. He was Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994-2001 and is currently Honorary Artistic President of INTERKULTUR/World Choir Games. His works, including eight vocal cycles and a series of sacred motets, are regularly performed throughout the world and have been recorded on over 200 CDs, several of which have received Grammy nominations. An award-winning documentary by filmmaker Michael Stillwater, *Shining Night: A Portrait of Composer Morten Lauridsen*, was released in 2012. Information about the film is at songwithoutborders.net.

Named an "American Choral Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2005, he was awarded the 2007 National Medal of Arts, the highest artistic award in the United States, by the President in a White House ceremony "for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power, and spiritual depth."

For more about Morten Lauridsen:
www.peermusicClassical.com
www.mortenlauridsen.net