

lansing mcloskey

# sudden music

four songs for soprano and piano  
texts by javen tanner



lansing mcloskey

*commissioned by  
mormon artists group*

# sudden music

soprano and piano

## PERFORMANCE NOTES:

Accidentals apply to the octave in which they appear and hold throughout the measure, though in highly chromatic passages courtesy accidentals are given.

$\text{J} = \text{J}$  at all meter changes unless otherwise indicated.

Approximate duration: 16 minutes



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## **Sudden Music**

### **1.**

Look at the generous spread of stars before us,  
the sporadic fire of the past, the larger shadow beyond.  
Look at the throw of juniper burning into nothing,  
  
the chipped bricks, the warped wood,  
the shingles bleached under a heavy moon.  
Listen to the names whispered into pillows,  
  
names we loved or never knew we loved,  
names that dripped from the corners of our lips as we slept.  
Listen in darkness to the sudden music of loss.

### **2.**

Let desire escape and rise as smoke from the burning cedar.  
Watch it lift into the mute density of winter  
and rub itself on the black layer  
  
that separates voice from sound, breath from prayer—  
smoke blurring the outline of the body  
with the stillness that ensues;  
  
smoke continuing through the nakedness  
of branches, to hover in the valley,  
to thin with the smoke of other desires.

### **3.**

Consider the snow and its slow work,  
dressing dead orchards, dulling our sense of what was  
until we can no longer say with conviction,  
  
"They were apple trees, it was summer."  
Consider this and be content with winter: the cool wisdom  
blown across the ear, the patches of bloodless grass.

Because if memory is anything it is dirty banks of snow  
or rancid ice decaying into water. And what remains  
is suspect at best. It will not be able to comfort us.

### **4.**

Look at the frost growing its white mold  
on the window, clouding the periphery, focusing  
our attention on that which escapes us—  
  
on that which has always escaped us. Let it go.  
Let go of the fire, the shadow, the disappearing smoke.  
Let go of names dried as stains on our pillows.  
  
Fall a little, flinch and settle into dreams just under  
the surface of sleep. Listen to the muffled voices above.  
They sing, "Please, please," but from here it sounds like "peace."

# Sudden Music

1.

Lansing McLoskey  
text by Javen Tanner

$\text{♩} = 60$  *accel.* ----- With nervous energy ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 112$ )

The musical score consists of four staves of music for piano. Staff 1 (top) starts in 4/4 with a key signature of one sharp. It features a treble clef and a bass clef. Dynamics include *mp*, *mf*, and a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 60$  followed by *accel.*. The score then transitions to Staff 2 (middle), which starts in 5/4 with a key signature of one sharp. It includes dynamics *p sub.* and *mf*. Staff 3 (bottom) starts in 3/4 with a key signature of one sharp. Staff 4 (bottom) starts in 3/4 with a key signature of one sharp. The score concludes with a final section in 11/16 time at the bottom staff.

11

11  
16  
11  
16

9  
16

3  
4

14

3  
4  
3  
4

f

7  
8

7  
8

7  
16

16

7  
16  
12  
16

5  
8

5  
8

3  
4

19

A *f with urgency*

3  
4

4

Look!

19

*mp*

*mf*

21

Look

21

*p sub.*

*mf*

24 *mf*

Look \_\_\_\_\_ at the gen - erous spread of stars \_\_\_\_\_

24

27

be - fore us, \_\_\_\_\_

*8va-----*

*f*

*mp*

30 *mf*

the \_\_\_\_\_ spo - ra - dic fire \_\_\_\_\_

*mf*

*f*

*8va-----*

*f*

32 *f*

fire \_\_\_\_\_ of the past \_\_\_\_\_ the lar - ger

*f*

*6*

*6*

*6*

*mp*

*mf*

35

sha - dows be - yond.

*mp*

*mf*

38

*ff*

40

*f*

Look!

*mf*

Look

*p sub.*

*ff*

43

at the throw of ju - ni - per burn - ing

43

*mf*

*f sub.*

46

in - to noth - - ing,

B

49

no - thing.

*8va*

49

*ff*

54

4

54

4

...as a memory...

59

*mp*

the chipped brick,

3

the warped wood, the

59

*p*

63

shin - gles bleached \_\_\_\_\_ un - der \_\_\_\_\_ a hea - vy moon.

63

**C** *pleading*

66

**p** lis - ten \_\_\_\_\_

**mp** lis - ten

lis - ten to the names \_\_\_\_\_

66

70 *sensually*

4 the names whispered in - to pil - lows, \_\_\_\_\_

70

74

names we loved or ne-ver knew we loved,

74

78

names that dripped \_\_\_\_\_

dripped \_\_\_\_\_

from the cor -

78

82

ners\_\_\_\_ of our lips\_\_\_\_\_

as\_\_\_\_\_ we\_\_\_\_\_ slept...

82

85

*p*

slept\_\_\_\_\_

85

89

D

89

*mf*

LH

(p)

(B $\flat$ )

92 *mf*

Lis - ten Lis - ten in the dark - - - ness

92 *p*

95 *mp* *fp*

to the sud - den

95 *mf*

E

99 *mf*

mu - - - - - sic

99 *mf*

101 *mf*

mu - - - - - sic

This musical score consists of six systems of music for piano and voice. The first system (measures 92-93) features a treble clef, a bass clef, and a bass staff. The second system (measures 92-93) has a treble clef and two bass staves. The third system (measures 95-96) shows a mix of 4/4 and 3/4 time signatures. The fourth system (measures 95-96) also includes a bass staff. The fifth system (measures 99-100) begins with a bass clef and a 5/4 time signature, followed by a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The sixth system (measures 101-102) continues with a bass clef and a 5/4 time signature, followed by a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The vocal part includes lyrics such as 'Lis - ten', 'Listen in the dark - - - ness', 'to the sud - den', 'mu - - - - - sic', and 'mu - - - - - sic'. Dynamic markings like *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *fp*, and *mf* are placed above the staves. Measure numbers 92, 95, 99, and 101 are indicated at the start of each system.

103

mu - - - - -

103

104

105 f

sic

106 mf

ff >

107 f

of loss.

108

109

110 ff 6 6

v.

# Sudden Music

2.

With longing & desire  $\text{♩} = 60$

Lansing McLoskey  
text by Javen Tanner

4

Let de - sire es - cape \_\_\_\_\_ and

5  
4

4

p

5  
4

5  
4

6

rise \_\_\_\_\_ as smoke \_\_\_\_\_ from burn-ing ce - dar. Watch it

5  
4

5  
4

5  
4

10

lift in-to the mute den - si - ty \_\_\_\_\_ of win - ter \_\_\_\_\_ and rub it -

5  
4

10

5  
4

5  
4

14

- self on the black lay - er that sep - a - rates voice from sound, breath

14

18 *mf*

— from prayer. smoke — blurring the

18

22

out - line of the bo - - - dy with the still-ness that en - sues;

22

26 *poco cresc.* - - -

smoke con - tin-u - ing through the na - ked - ness of

26

31 (take a bit of time...) 3 -

branch-es, to ho - ver in the val - ley,

31 8<sup>va</sup>

(8<sup>vb</sup>) -

36 f mp

to thin with the smoke smoke

36 8<sup>va</sup>

(8<sup>vb</sup>) -

42 3 - p

of o-ther de - sires de - sires.

42 8<sup>va</sup> -

(8<sup>vb</sup>) -

48 3 - 6 - 4 -

48 8<sup>va</sup>

(8<sup>vb</sup>) -

# Sudden Music

3.

In the distance  $\text{♩} = 54$

Lansing McLoskey  
Text by Javen Tanner

The musical score consists of three staves of music. The top staff uses common time (4/4) and includes a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 54$ . The middle staff uses common time (4/4) and includes dynamics *p* and *mp*, and a tempo marking of *Adagio*. The bottom staff uses common time (4/4) and includes a tempo marking of *Adagio sim.* The vocal line is accompanied by piano chords. The lyrics are integrated into the vocal line, with musical markings such as *mp*, *mf*, and *p* above the notes, and measure numbers 1 through 8 placed above the staves. The piano part features eighth-note patterns and sustained notes.

1      In the distance  $\text{♩} = 54$

2      *p*

3      *mp*

4      *Adagio*

5      *p*

6      *Adagio sim.*

7      *mp*

8      *mf*

9      *p*

10     *mf*

11     *Adagio*

Con - si - der — the snow — and its slow — work,

dres-sing dead — or - chards, dull - ing our sense of what was

11      *p*      *mf*      *p*  
 un - til we can no long-er say \_\_\_\_\_ with con-vic - tion,\_\_\_\_

11      *>p*  
 3      *#*o      *b*o      *#*o

14      A  
 2      3      4  
 4      4

14      *mp*      *pp*      *mf*      *(6/8) p*      *8va*  
 2      3      4      3      4  
 4      4      4      4

17      *slightly upbeat*  
*mp*  
 4      4      4      4  
 "They were ap - ple trees,      it was sum - mer."

17      *8va*  
 4      4      4      4  
 (6+2)      (8+4)  
 4      4      4      4  
*sim.*  
 (RH)      (RH)      (RH)      (RH)

19      *mf*  
 Con-si - der,\_\_\_\_ con-si-der this\_\_\_\_ and be con-tent with win-ter:  
 19      *8va*  
 4      4      4      4  
 (RH)      (RH)      (RH)      (RH)

22 (calmly) *mf*

the cool. wis - - - dom

22 *p*

(LH) (RH)

24 *mf* *mp* *p*

blown a-cross the ear, the patch-es of blood - less grass.

24 *8va*

3 4 4 4

**B**

27 *p*

,

Be - cause if mem - - - o - ry

27 *mp* *(mp)* *p*

(RH) (RH)

29 3

is an - y - thing it is dir - ty banks of snow

29 *8va* *mf*

32 C *mp*

or ran - cid ice de - cay-ing in - to wa - - - - ter.

32 8 *mp* *mf* *p*

*p*

*Ran.*

34

34 *8va-*

*mp*

36 *p*

And what re - mains

(*8va-*)

*mf* *p*

*pp*

38 *mp*

is sus - pect *poco > >* at best.

38

40

It will not be a - - - ble

mf

40

to com - - - - fort us.

*f*

42

in resignation... rit. ----- (LH) p

44

It will not be a - ble to

44

com - - - fort us.

*a tempo*

46

pp

8 8

Reo.

# Sudden Music

4.

Lansing McLoskey  
text by Javen Tanner

Freely, as a recitative ( $\text{♩} = \text{c.} .54$ )

The musical score consists of eight staves of music, each with a different instrumentation. The instruments include a treble clef part, a bass clef part, a piano or harpsichord part, and a basso continuo part (pedal keyboard). The music is in common time, with various key signatures (G major, A major, D major, E major) indicated by sharps and flats. The vocal parts feature lyrics such as "Look at the frost", "grow - ing its white mold", "on the win - dow, cloud - ing the pe - ri - pher - y, ---", and "fo - cu - sing our at - ten - tion on". Performance instructions include dynamics like *mf*, *p*, *sf*, and *mp*; articulations like *sus*, *sim.*, and *in tempo; evenly*; and rhythmic markings like *3*, *6*, and *4*. The score also includes measure numbers (12, 10, 5, 3, 7) and a note "(no Ped.)" at the bottom.

Look — at the frost —

(12) \* sim. (12)

3 grow - ing its white mold —

in tempo; evenly

(12)

5 on the win - dow, cloud - ing the pe - ri - pher -

mf p 3 4 3 4

7 y, --- fo - cu - sing our at - ten - tion on

10 5 4 4 4 4

(no Ped.)

**A** Smoothly, rolling along... ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. 78}$ )

9 rit. ----- A Smoothly, rolling along... ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. 78}$ )  
that which es-ca-pes us

9 rit. ----- 5 4  
*poco mf*  
on \_\_\_\_\_ that which has al - ways

11 5 4  
es - - - caped us.

13 Let it go.  
Let go of the fire,

15

19

17

fire,  
the sha - dow,

17

19

the dis-ap-pear-ing smoke.

Let

19

21

go of names

dried

as stains

on

21

23

our pil -

lows.

23

B

25 Fall a lit - tle, flinch

25 *mp*

27 *languidly*  
and set - tle in - to dreams just un - der

27 *mf*

29 the sur - - - face of sleep.

29 *p* *mp*

31

31

C *mp*  
 33 Listen to the muf - fled voi - ces a - bove.  
 33  
 They sing!  
 35  
*mf*  
*f*  
*quasi-mf*  
 37 sing, sing,  
 37  
 39 *mf*  
 $\frac{5}{4}$   
 39 *mp*  
 $\frac{5}{4}$   
 $\frac{5}{4}$

41 *rit.* *mf* *p* , D A tempo ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. 78}$ )  
*mf* (imploringly)

they sing,  
 "Please,

41 *p*  
*mf*

43 please,

43

45

47 *rit.* *mf* *p* 5  
 but from here it sounds like 5  
*rit.* *mf* *p* 5

49

E *a tempo*  
*mp* *calmly*

"peace."

49

A musical score page featuring two staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a single measure containing a dotted half note. The bottom staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp, divided into two measures of four notes each. The notes are primarily eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns. Measures 1 and 3 begin with a sharp sign, while measures 2 and 4 begin with a natural sign. Measures 1 and 3 end with a sharp sign, while measures 2 and 4 end with a natural sign. Measures 1 and 2 have a bass clef bassoon part below them, and measures 3 and 4 have a bass clef double bass part below them. Measures 1 and 3 have a bass clef cello part below them. Measures 1 and 2 have a bass clef double bass part below them. Measures 3 and 4 have a bass clef cello part below them. Measures 1 and 2 have a bass clef double bass part below them. Measures 3 and 4 have a bass clef cello part below them.

A musical score page featuring two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and consists of a single measure starting with a dotted half note. The bottom staff is in bass clef and also contains a single measure. Both measures are set against a common time signature indicated by a '4' at the beginning of each measure. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

Musical score page 55. The top staff shows a melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, and finally A5. The bottom staff shows harmonic patterns with various note heads and rests. Measure 55 concludes with a dynamic instruction *8va -*.