

DANIEL ELDER MUSIC

AGAIN

FOR SATB VOICES, PIANO,
AND SOPRANO SAXOPHONE

Program Notes

There's something noble in the philosophy that life isn't an end goal, but a journey. "Again" sets a new poem that evokes this epic theme through seeking the wisdom of learning, loving, and living, just to name a few. The first-person perspective is not a single narrator but more literally that of each reader, and as we hear these words they are intended as archetypes of our own life experiences, drawing an entire audience together in the sharing of a profound journey. Each stanza reveals life's true imperative; that we never stop growing. Musically this is depicted in a constant, bubbling minimalism in the piano, laying an energetic groundwork for the chorus to sing with a real human awe of these powerful emotional experiences. Whereas the voices function as an observer, the piano establishes life all around, and upon all this the soprano saxophone dances lightly and vivaciously as if representing the very spirit of this sought-after wisdom; the voice repeatedly offering one word in response to our every failure and triumph: "Again."

Text

I read the last line, and I stared
deep in the empty page below,
when in this void more letters swirled
to form one final word: "Again."

With wordless reverence to the Muse
my brushstrokes danced in shades of light,
and in my opus newly borne
was one exuberant cry: "Again."

I loved, I lost; my heavy heart
felt full of doubt in how to dream,
but through my tears I felt your hand
reach out to beckon me: "Again."

I climbed into the whistling wind
to reach the highest summit's crown,
yet in the restless pines below
I watched them wordless point: "Again."

After the music died I stared,
flanked all around by souls of song,
and in the applause I could hear
hundreds of ears pleading: "Again."

—Daniel Elder

About the Composer

As a prolific writer of vocal and instrumental music, Daniel Elder (b. 1986) ties these genres together to create forms and aesthetics that are at once lyrical and textural, drawing its roots particularly from the impressionist movement. Critics have hailed his works as "deeply affecting" and "without peer," with emotional evocations ranging from lush lyricism to jagged polyphony. Daniel's compositions have earned recent recognition from The American Prize, The Simon Carrington Chamber Singers, Cantus, and many others, including a recording by the Grammy-award-winning Eric Whitacre Singers made at Abbey Road Studios as part of their 80th Anniversary Anthem Competition. The first commercial album of Daniel's choral works, "The Heart's Reflection: Music of Daniel Elder," was released in October 2013 by Westminster Choir College (Princeton, NJ) and Naxos of America, and debuted at #53 on the overall classical Billboard chart. Daniel currently resides in Nashville, TN as a full-time freelance composer. He is published around the world by renowned houses such as Carus Verlag, Edition Peters, GIA Publications, Walton Music, and others, while also self-publishing his newest releases directly through J.W. Pepper and SMP Press. More information may be found at www.danieleldermusic.com.

AGAIN

words and music
by Daniel Elder (b. 1986)
(ASCAP)

Allegro vivace (♩ = c. 216) (sempre ♩ = ♩)

(displayed in concert pitch)

Soprano Sax

mp leggiero

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Allegro vivace (♩ = c. 216) (sempre ♩ = ♩)

Piano

mp *sim.*

5

mf

5

mf

9 12

f

mp

I read the last

mp

I read the last

9 12

f

fp

13

line, and I stared deep in the emp - ty page be - low,

13

line, and I stared deep in the emp - ty page be - low,

17 *mp*

when in this void more let- ters

mp

when in this void more let- ters

mp

when in this void more let- ters

mp

when in this void more let- ters

17

21 *mf* *mp*

swirled _____ to form one _____ fi - nal word: "A -

mf *mp*

swirled _____ to form one _____ fi - nal word: "A -

mf

swirled _____ to form one _____ fi - nal word:

mf

swirled _____ to form one _____ fi - nal word:

21 *mf* *sub. p*

25

mp

gain." (n)

gain." (n)

25

29

mf

29

mf

33

f

mf

mf

mf

mf

With — word - less rev - 'rance to the Muse my brush - strokes

With word - less rev - 'rance to the Muse my brush - strokes

With — word - less rev - 'rance to the Muse my brush - strokes

With word - less rev - 'rance to the Muse my brush - strokes

33

f

mp

36

*sub. p**mf*

danced in shades of light,

sub. p

mf

danced in shades of light, — in shades they

sub. p

mf

danced in shades of light,

sub. p

mf

danced in shades of light, in shades they

36

fp

mp

40 *mp*

and in my o - pus new - ly borne was one ex - u - b'rant

mp

danced, was one ex - u - b'rant

mp

and in my o - pus new - ly borne was one ex - u - b'rant

mp

danced, was one ex - u - b'rant

40

43

45

p *sfz* *mp* *leggero*

f *mp*

cry: "A - gain."

f *mp*

cry: "A - gain." (n) "A -

f *mp*

cry: "A - gain."

f *mp*

cry: "A - gain." (n) "A -

43

f *sub. p*

47

p

p

p

p

gain." (n) I loved,

gain." (n) I loved,

gain." (n) I loved,

gain." (n) I loved,

47

mp

p

51

I lost; my heav - y heart

I lost; my heav - y heart

I lost; my heav - y heart

I lost; my heav - y heart

51

sim.

55

felt full of doubt in how to dream,

felt full of doubt in how to dream,

felt full of doubt in how to dream,

felt full of doubt in how to dream,

55

59

mf

mp

but through

mp

but through

mp

but through

mp

but through

59

mf

63

mp

f

— my — tears I felt your hand — reach out — to beck - on

f

— my — tears I felt your hand — reach out — to beck - on

f

— my — tears I felt your hand — reach out — to beck - on

f

— my — tears I felt your hand — reach out — to beck - on

63

mp

f

For Review Only

"A gain." I climbed

sfz *con brio*

"A - gain." I climbed

sfz *con brio*

"A - gain." I climbed

sfz *con brio*

"A - gain." I climbed

68

70

sfz *sfz* *sfz*

to the whis-t'ling wind _____ to reach the _____

to the whis-t'ling wind _____ to reach the _____

to the whis-t'ling wind _____ to reach the _____

to the whis-t'ling wind _____ to reach the _____

70

to the whis-t'ling wind _____ to reach the _____

73

sfz

— high - est sum - mit's crown, —

— high - est sum - mit's crown, —

— high - est sum - mit's crown, —

— high - est sum - mit's crown, —

73

77 *mf* 78

yet in the rest - less pines — be -

mf

yet in the rest - less pines — be -

mf

yet in the rest - less pines — be -

mf

yet in the rest - less pines — be -

77 78 *mp*

80

mp

low I watched them word - less point: _____

mp

low I watched them word - less

mp

low I watched: "A -

mp

low I watched: _____ "A -

80

83

85

mf *leggero*

f

"A - gain." "A - gain." _____ "A -

f

point: "A - gain." "A - gain." _____ "A -

fp

gain." _____ "A - gain."

fp

gain." _____ "A - gain."

83

85

f

sub. mf

87

f con brio

gain." "A - gain."

gain." "A - gain."

"A - gain." "A - gain."

"A - gain." "A - gain."

87

f con brio

For Review Only

91 94

p
mp
Af - ter the mu - sic
mp
Af - ter the mu - sic

91 94

p
mp

95

died I stared, flanked all a - round by souls of song,
died I stared, flanked all a - round by souls of song,

95

p
mp

99

102

p possible

and in the ap - plause

and in the ap - plause

mp

and in the ap - plause

mp

and in the ap - plause

99

102

mp

and in the ap - plause

103

103

I could hear _____ hun - dreds of ears plead - ing: "A -

I could hear _____ hun - dreds of ears plead - ing: "A -

I could hear _____ hun - dreds of ears plead - ing: "A -

I could hear _____ hun - dreds of ears plead - ing: "A -

The musical score consists of four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal parts have lyrics: "I could hear _____ hun - dreds of ears plead - ing: 'A -". The piano accompaniment features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with some chords and single notes.

103

103

The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass). The right hand plays a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the left hand plays a bass line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4.

107

sfz *f con brio* *sfz*

gain." "A - gain." "A -

f con brio *f con brio* *f con brio* *f con brio*

gain." "A - gain." "A -

gain." "A - gain." "A -

gain." "A -

107

f con brio

111

sfz

mf più dolce

gain." "A - gain." "A -

mf più dolce

gain." "A - gain." "A -

mf più dolce

gain." "A - gain." "A -

mf più dolce

gain." "A - gain." "A -

111

mf più dolce

115

116

mp *leggero*

mp

gain." "A - gain." (n)

mp

gain." "A - gain."

mp

gain."

mp

gain."

115

116

mp

sim.

119

p *pp*

119

p

123



123



127



For Review Only