

DT0051 | TRUMBORE
MEZZO SOPRANO & PIANO

WHAT ONLY POETRY CAN DO

Mezzo Soprano & Piano
Text by Barbara Crooker


daletrumbore
c o m p o s e r

What Only Poetry Can Do sets four texts about writing by poets Barbara Crooker and Julie Kane.
This piece was premiered by soprano Yayra Sanchez, soprano & Dale Trumbore, piano
at the 2016 unSUNg Festival in Glendale, CA.

1. WHY WRITE?

Because I'm here, this late in the century,
looking at the ink-filled sky,
seeing the April comet, a luminous exclamation,
not believing, with the alternatives
of nuclear char or unchecked epidemic,
that anything from our time will last.
But still, I was here, on this rock,
this shaley hillside, violets blooming
in the grass, for a short time. I suffered,
I lived, I loved in the face of everything,
and I have to write it down.

Barbara Crooker

2. USED BOOK

What luck – an open bookstore up ahead
as rain lashed awnings over Royal Street,
and then to find the books were secondhand,
with one whole wall assigned to poetry;
and then, as if that wasn't luck enough,
to find, between Jarrell and Weldon Kees,
the blue-on-cream, familiar backbone of
my chapbook, out of print since '83
its cover very slightly coffee-stained,
but aging (all in all) no worse than flesh
through all those cycles of the seasons since
its publication by a London press.
Then, out of luck, I read the name inside:
The man I thought would love me till I died.

Julie Kane

3. REJECTION SLIP

forefinger sliced open
by rejection slip:
the cruelest cut of all

Barbara Crooker

4. WHAT ONLY POETRY CAN DO

Make us stop, in our harried multi-tasking
modern
(or post-modern) lives, away from the ambient
light
of electricity and all that follows, and look up,
into the great glass eye of night, gazing in dumb
struck wonder at the coded messages of the stars.

Barbara Crooker

1. Why Write?

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

Very slow $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

Soprano *p*

Why write? Be-cause I'm here, this

Piano *pp* *mp*

5

late in the cen - tu-ry, look - ing at the ink - filled sky,

9 *poco rit.*

see - ing the Ap - ril co - met, a lu - mi-nous ex - cla - ma - tion, —

What Only Poetry Can Do

13 **A little slower** *p*

not be - lie - ving, with the al - ter - na - tives of nu - clear char or un - checked ep - i -

19 *f*

de - mic, that a - ny - thing from our time will last.

23 *rit.* **Very slow** *pp* *accel.*

But still, I was here, on this

28 *♩ = ca. 60* *mf*

rock, this sha - ley hill - side, vio - lets bloom - ing in the grass, for a short -

32

time. *p* I suf - fered, I

36

f *rit.* Taking time *p*
lived, I loved in the face of ev-'ry - thing, and I

41

In tempo *mf* *p*
have to write it down. I have to write it down, I

45

molto rit. *Very slow*
have to write it down.

2. Used Book

Text by Julie Kane

Music by Dale Trumbore

Breezy; ♩ = ca. 100

mf *p* *poco rit.*

What luck - an o-pen book-store_ up a - head as rain lashed awn-ings_ o-ver

A tempo

poco

Roy-al Street and then to find the books were_ se-cond hand, with

poco rit. *rit.* **Slower; ♩ = ca. 54**

one whole wall as-signed to po - e - try, and then, as if that was -n't luck e -

13 *rit.*

nough, to find be-tween Jar-rell and Wel-don Kees, the blue-on-cream, fa - mi-liar back-bone

17 **Very slow** *accel.*

of my chap-book, my chap-book, out of print since 'eight-y three - its

20 **A tempo** ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 54$)

co - ver___ ve - ry slight - ly___ cof - fee - stained, but ag - ing (all in all) no worse than

23 *accel.*

flesh through all those cy - cles_ of the sea - sons since its pub - li - ca - tion_ by a Lon - don

cresc. *mf* *p*
Ped.

What Only Poetry Can Do

27 **Tempo I** *rit.*

press.

mf *f*

32 **A little slower** *p*

Then, out of luck, I read* the name in -

p

35 *f* *p*

side: the man I thought would love me till I

(slow roll) *f* *p*

Red.

39 *rit.*

died.

p

*Past tense; pronounced "red."

3. Rejection Slip

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

♩ = ca. 72

fore-finger sliced open by rejection slip: the

4

cruel - est cut of all.

4. What Only Poetry Can Do

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

1 *p* ————— *mf*

Make us stop, in our har-ried mul-ti-task-ing

ppp *p*

3

5 *f* *p*

mo-der-n (or post-mo-der-n) lives, a-way from the

mf *f* *pp* *p*

3 3 3

9 *cresc.* *f*

am-bi-ent light of e-lec-tri-ci-ty and all that fol-lows,

mf

3 3

What Only Poetry Can Do

14 *p*

Make us stop, in our har-ried, mul-ti-task-ing mo-dern or post mo-ern

pp *mf*

18 *rit.* **Freely; slow**

lives, and look up, in-to the great glass eye of night,

24 *mp* *f* *taking time*

look up, ga-zing in dumb - struck won-der at the co - ded mes-sa-ges

30 *f* *rit.*

of the stars.

pp *cresc.* *mf* *pp*

*G is preferable, but the singer may choose either note.