

DT0088 | TRUMBORE  
WHAT ONLY POETRY CAN DO | BARITONE & PIANO

# WHAT ONLY POETRY CAN DO

Baritone & Piano

Text by Barbara Crooker

The logo for Dale Trumbore, featuring a stylized musical note above the letter 'd' in the word 'daletrumbore'. Below the main text, the words 'composer' are written in a smaller, lowercase font, with each letter centered under a corresponding letter in the main name: 'c' under 'd', 'o' under 'a', 'm' under 'l', 'p' under 'e', 'o' under 't', 's' under 'r', 'e' under 'u', and 'r' under 'b'.

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

# WHAT ONLY POETRY CAN DO

## 1. Why Write?

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

Very slow *p*  $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

Baritone

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

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

*poco rit.*

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13 **A little slower**

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

19

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 *mf* ♩ = ca. 60

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

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32

time. *p* I suf - fered, I

Measures 32-35: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Measure 32: whole note G2, quarter rest. Measure 33: quarter rest, quarter note G2. Measure 34: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 35: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Treble clef: Measure 32: quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 33: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 34: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 35: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Pedal point on G2.

36

lived, I loved in the face of ev-'ry - thing, and I

Measures 36-40: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Measure 36: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 37: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 38: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 39: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 40: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Treble clef: Measure 36: quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 37: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 38: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 39: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 40: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Pedal point on G2.

41

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

Measures 41-44: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Measure 41: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 42: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 43: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 44: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Treble clef: Measure 41: quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 42: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 43: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 44: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Pedal point on G2.

45 *molto rit.*

Very slow

have to write it down.

Measures 45-48: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Measure 45: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 46: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 47: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Measure 48: quarter note G2, quarter note F2, quarter note E2. Treble clef: Measure 45: quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 46: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 47: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Measure 48: quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4. Pedal point on G2.

# 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**

6 *poco* *<mf*

Roy-al Street and then to find the books were\_ se-cond hand, with

10 *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** (♩ = ca. 54)

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

23

*cresc.* *mf* *p* *accel.*

*Red.*

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

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27 **Tempo I**

*rit.*

press.

*mf* *p* *f*

32 **A little slower**

*p*

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

*p* *f*

35

*f* *p*

side: the man I thought would love me till I

(slow roll)

*f* *p*

Red.

39

*rit.*

died.

*p* *f*

8vb

\*Past tense; pronounced "red."

# 3. Rejection Slip

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$

*ff* 3 3 *p*

fore-finger sliced open by rejection slip: the

*p* *gliss* *f*

4 *mf*

cruel - est cut of all.

*mf* *p* *pp*

# 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-dern

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.

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