

DT0089 | TRUMBORE
WHAT ONLY POETRY CAN DO | TENOR & PIANO

WHAT ONLY POETRY CAN DO

Tenor & Piano

Text by Barbara Crooker

The logo for Dale Trumbore, featuring a stylized musical note above the letter 'd' in the word '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 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

Tenor *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,

p *mp*

9

see - ing the Ap - ril co - met, a lu - mi-nous ex - cla - ma - tion, *poco rit.*

p *mp*

What Only Poetry Can Do

2

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_

What Only Poetry Can Do

32

time. 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

Breezy; ♩ = ca. 100

mf *p* *poco rit.*

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

6 *poco* **A tempo**

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 -

What Only Poetry Can Do

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

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 - side: the

p (slow roll)

36 *f* *p*

man I thought would love me till I

f *p*

Ped.

39 *rit.*

died.

p

*Past tense; pronounced "red."

3. Rejection Slip

Text by Barbara Crooker

♩ = ca. 72

fore - fin - ger sliced o - pen by re - jec - tion slip: the

cruel - est cut of all.

4. What Only Poetry Can Do

Text by Barbara Crooker

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-4. The vocal line is in 4/4 time, starting with a rest in measure 1. The lyrics are: "Make us stop, in our har-ried mul-ti-task-ing". Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). There are trills and triplets in the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is in 4/4 time, starting with *ppp* (pianissimo) and *p* (piano). It features a triplet in the bass line.

Musical score for the second system, measures 5-8. The vocal line continues with lyrics: "mo-dern (or post-mo-dern) lives, a-way from the". Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). There are trills and triplets in the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is in 4/4 time, with dynamics *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), and *pp* (pianissimo). It features triplets in both the treble and bass lines.

Musical score for the third system, measures 9-12. The vocal line continues with lyrics: "am-bi-ent light of e-lec-tri-ci-ty and all that fol-lows,". Dynamics include *cresc.* (crescendo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). There are trills and triplets in the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is in 2/4 time, with dynamics *mf* (mezzo-forte). It features triplets in both the treble and bass lines.

What Only Poetry Can Do

14 *p*

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

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

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

24 *mp* *f* *freely* - - - -

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

30 *f* *rit.*

of the stars.

*Singer may choose to sing either the G or the high C.