How to Go On
for SSAATTBB chorus
with divisi and soloists

Texts by
Barbara Crooker
Amy Fleury
Laura Foley

Music by
Dale Trumbore
HOW TO GO ON

PROGRAM NOTE

Following the death of a loved one, contemporary poet Barbara Crooker writes, "How can we go on / knowing the end of the story?" How to Go On answers this question in eight movements that range from questioning and doubt ("How") to introspection ("Relinquishment") to ultimate acceptance of our own mortality ("When at Last"). Threading solo voices in and out of the choral texture, How to Go On asks how we each confront our own mortality, and how, in the face of that knowledge, we can bring quiet grace back into our daily lives. Ultimately, this work finds beauty, catharsis, and solace in the words of three living poets: Crooker, Amy Fleury, and Laura Foley.

How to Go On was commissioned from composer Dale Trumbore by Choral Arts Initiative (Brandon Elliott, director); premiered on July 16, 2017 in Anaheim, CA; and released on an album of the same name in March 2017. This piece for SSAATTBB chorus and soloists is approximately 35 minutes long.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Soloists may differ from movement to movement.

When a word closes from a vowel to humming on “nn,” “mm,” or “ing,” the transition from vowel to consonant should always be a slow close, not an abrupt one.

Whenever a glissando is marked between two notes, singers should use the entire marked duration of the slide to reach the next note.

The eight movements How to Go On may be performed in a different order from the one in this score, or they may be excerpted in performance. Three of many possible movement orders are below, listed along with the conductor or singer who originated that order. Regardless of the order, when all eight movements are performed, “When at Last” should remain the final movement.

1. How
2. However Difficult
3. To See It
4. Relinquishment
5. Requiescat
6. Knowing the End
7. Sometimes Peace Comes
8. When at Last

1. How
2. To See It
3. However Difficult
4. Sometimes Peace Comes
5. Requiescat
6. Knowing the End
7. Relinquishment
8. When at Last

(Brandon Elliott) (Jenny Wong) (Ian Chan)
HOW TO GO ON

Texts are arranged in the movement order in which they were premiered.

1. How

How can we go on, knowing the end of the story?


(“To See It,” continued)

and turn our head back, to see it—perched on the top of the hill, our life lit from inside.

—Laura Foley, from Syringa, 2007.

2. However Difficult

However difficult you think it might be, it is yours, this life, even the failures are yours, even the garden, though it be unkempt, is yours.


3. To See It

We need to separate to see the life we’ve made. We need to leave our house where someone waits for us, patiently, warm beneath the sheets. We need to don a sweater, a coat, mittens, wrap a scarf around our neck, stride down the road, a cold winter morning.

4. Relinquishment

I am looking at pale blue ponds of melted ice on a frozen river and in them perfect clouds passing. Wind sends ripples along the water and trees cut sharp lines into the sky. Soon it will be gone, all of it and I will be sitting in darkness, sitting by a dark window, glad for having seen this earth, her elegant grace, how she turns away from the sun. And I will be learning, again, how to give it all up by simply turning. How to give it up to darkness, all you love. All of it. How to give it up again and again.

—Laura Foley, from Syringa, 2007.
5. Requiescat

Let us go, let go with the few roots
you have left clinging to this earth,
pull free, like the clean snap of a carrot
or radish, let us go, shake off this dirt,
let go, let go of your family, their story
hasn’t been told, yours is already written,
let go of the world, its sweetness and sorrow,
let go of your friends, we will cry, yes,
but we will not forget you, let go,
let go your fierce will and stubbornness,
it served you well, now let it go,
your courage will remain, let your daughters
become women, your husband lie in his bed of
pain,
your long journey is over, theirs is beginning,
let us go, become spirit and light, spring rain,
fly away from this prison of bone, let go,
wait for us, we’ll talk again later,
I am here by the phone, waiting for the call,
for this long suffering to be over,
let it go, your work is done,
soon we will bring you to the river,
bring your ashes to the current, let them flow
free,
earth, fire, cinders, rain, wait for us
on the other side of the river, let us go.


7. Sometimes Peace Comes

Sometimes peace is like this:
endless and gentle and soft
and no compulsion to go
anywhere. And even the fire
you walked through,
even the trail of ashes
is gone, not even a memory
in your heart, and even the sun is still,
unmoving and quiet,
and you have stepped into
a place beyond time,
beyond sadness and form.

A wide, high plain
where in the endless, deep silence
you find out what it is, what it is,
and your part in it.

—Laura Foley. from *Syringa*, 2007.

8. When at Last

When at last I join the democracy of dirt,
a tussock earthed over and grass healed,
I’ll gladly conspire in my own diminishment.

Let a pink peony bloom from my chest
and may it be visited by a charm of bees,
who will then carry the talcum of pollen
and nectar of clover to the grove where they
hive.
Let the honey they make be broken
from its comb, and release from its golden
hold,
onto some animal tongue, my soul.


6. Knowing the end

How can we go on, knowing the end of
the story?

—Barbara Crooker
How to Go On
for SSAATTBB a cappella chorus, with soloists

How

Text by Barbara Crooker
Music by Dale Trumbore

With ever-increasing emotion; \( \frac{4}{4} \) ca. 50

BASS 1

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

BASS 2

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

BASS 3

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

Piano

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

T. 1

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

T. 2

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

B. 1

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

B. 2

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

B. 3

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

Pno.

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\
& & & & & & & & & & & \\

\end{array} \]

© Dale Trumbore 2017, revised 2019
daletrumbore.com

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
How to Go On

How

How can we go on,

How can we go on,

How can we go on,
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
How to Go On

Solo 1

Solo 2

S.

A. 1

A. 2

T. 1

T. 2

B. 1

B. 2

B. 3

Pno.

molto rit. . . . In time

poco accel.  mf  f  molto rit. . . .

Ah, ______

Ah, ______

Ah, ______

How, ______

Ah, ______

How, ______

Ah, ______

on, How can we go on, How can we go on,

How can we go on, How can we go on, How can we go on,

on? How can we go on? How can we go on?

How can we go on, How can we go on, How

How, How, How, How, How, How,

How, How, How, How, How, How,

molto rit. . . . In time

poco accel.  mf  f  molto rit. . . .
How to Go On

Freely; $\frac{4}{4} = \text{ca. 40 or slower}\
(Soloist rejoins Sopranos)

In time; $\frac{4}{4} = \text{ca. 50}\

*Every singer sings the first beat of m. 25 together, then moves through the rest of the measure at their own speed, slowly and staggered. The fourth beat should be held until all singers have independently arrived at that beat (on "go").

**Slowly close to "nn" over the course of two beats.

How can we go on?**

(Soloist rejoins Altos)

(Soloist rejoins Sopranos)

(Soloist rejoins Sopranos)

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
How to Go On

However difficult

Text by Laura Foley

Music by Dale Trumbore

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
yours, this life, e-ven the fail-ures are yours, e-ven the gar-den, though it
This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
*Alto 1s may join Soprano 2s mm. 12-15.

Slightly slower; \( \text{q} = \text{ca. 80} \)

We need to don a sweater, a coat, mittens, wrap a
How to Go On

To See It

\( \frac{\text{rit.}}{\text{j} = \text{ca. } 40 \text{ or even slower}} \)

To See It

\( \frac{\text{rit.}}{\text{j} = \text{ca. } 40 \text{ or even slower}} \)

To See It

\( \frac{\text{rit.}}{\text{j} = \text{ca. } 40 \text{ or even slower}} \)

scarf around our neck,

stride down the road,

for:

cold winter morning,

and turn our head back, to see it-

In time, slightly faster than before; \( \text{j} = \text{ca. } 48 \)

cold winter morning,

and turn our head back,

In time, slightly faster than before; \( \text{j} = \text{ca. } 48 \)
perched on the top of the hill, our life

perched on the top of the hill, our life

our life

our life

our life

our life

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
Relinquishment

Text by Laura Foley

Music by Dale Trumbore

I am looking, I am looking, I am looking at __ pale blue ponds of melted ice on a frozen river____

I am, (mm)** I am looking

at pale blue ponds on a frozen river____

at pale blue ponds on a frozen river____

Solo 1 should be brought out slightly over Solos 2 and 3.

**Slowly close to "mm."
In time

Wind sends ripples across the water

How to Go On
Relinquishment

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
and trees cut sharp lines.

Solo 2

and trees cut sharp lines.

Solo 3

and trees cut sharp lines.

S.

Ah, in to the sky.

A.

and trees cut sharp lines in to the sky.

T.

and trees cut sharp lines in to the sky.

B.

and trees cut sharp lines in to the sky.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
Solo 3

How to Go On
Relinquishment

Lush; \( \dot{=} \) ca. 40 or slower

Slowly, deliberately; \( \dot{=} \) ca. 48

32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pno.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( f )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| hav-ing seen this earth, her e-le-gant grace, How she turns a-
| \( f \) | \( \text{ff} \) | \( \text{ppp} \) |
| hav-ing seen this earth, her e-le-gant grace, How she turns a-
| \( f \) | \( \text{ff} \) | \( \text{ppp} \) |
| hav-ing seen this earth, her e-le-gant grace, |

32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pno.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( f )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hav-ing seen this earth, her e-le-gant grace,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solo 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \text{mf} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How she turns a-way from the sun, And</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( p )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>way from the sun* (nn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( p )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>way from the sun* (nn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( p )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sun* (nn)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pno.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \text{mf} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{mp} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{pp} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{pp} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{pp} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Close slowly to "nn" over the course of four beats.**
How to Go On
Relinquishment

In time

All,
How to give it up again and again

In time

All,
How to give it up again again

Hushed, slow

rit.
Hushed, slow

rit.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
Tempo 1

rit.

Tempo 1

6

go with the few roots you have

6

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
How to Go On
Requiescat

Pno.

A. 2
A. 1
B. 2
B. 1
S. 2
S. 1
T. 1

left clinging to this earth, pull free. Oh,

T. 2

left clinging to this earth, pull free, like the clean snap of a

R. 1

left clinging to this earth, pull free, like the clean snap of a

R. 2

left clinging to this earth, pull free.

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.  
Here's the next page:
In time; \( \dot{=} \) ca. 56

P. Unis.

Oh, let go of your fam-ly, their story has'n't been told,

S. 1

S. 2

Oh, let go,

A. 1

let go of your fam-ly, their story has'n't been told,

A. 2

let go of your fam-ly, their story has'n't been told,

T. 1

their story has'n't been told,

T. 2

let go, their story has'n't been told,

B. 1

B. 2

30 In time; \( \dot{=} \) ca. 56

Pno.
How to Go On
Requiescat

poco accel. . . . poco rit. . . . In time \( \langle = \text{ca. 56} \rangle \)

oh,

let go of the world, its

your is already written, let go.

its

your is already written, let go of the world, its

yours is already written, let go of the world, its

yours is already written, let go of the world, its

poco accel. . . . poco rit. . . . In time \( \langle = \text{ca. 56} \rangle \)

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
sweetness and sorrow. let go of your friends, we will cry, yes, but
sweetness and sorrow. let go of your friends, we will cry, yes, but
sweetness and sorrow. let go. we will cry, yes, but
sweetness and sorrow. we will cry, yes, but
sweetness and sorrow. we will cry, yes, but

How to Go On
Requiescat

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
A little slower; $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}t} = \text{ca. 60}$

\[ \text{p} \quad \text{accel.} \quad \frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}t} = \text{ca. 72} \quad \text{rit.} \]

now let it go.

\[ \text{p} \quad \text{f} \]

now let it go.

\[ \text{p} \quad \text{f} \]

now let it go.

\[ \text{mp} \quad \text{f} \]

it served you well, now let it go, your courage will remain,

\[ \text{mp} \quad \text{f} \]

it served you well, now let it go, your courage will remain,
let your daughters become women, your husband lie in his bed of
Oh, your husband lie in his bed of
your husband lie in his bed of
Oh, lie in his bed of

\[ q = \text{ca. 60 rit.} \]
In time; \( \frac{j}{4} = \text{ca. } 60 \)

\[ \text{rit.} \]

64

*S. 1

pp

\[ \text{pno.} \]

In time; \( \frac{j}{4} = \text{ca. } 60 \)

\[ \text{rit.} \]

64

*Close slowly to "(ng)" over the course of two beats.

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
Fluid, determined; \( \frac{\dot{f}}{} = \text{ca. 80} \)

Pno.

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
fly away from this prison of bone, let go, let go.

fly away, let go, let go,

fly away, go, let go,

fly away, let go, let

let go, let

let go, let

let go, let
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
I am* (mm) Oh,

Gently, slow

I am* (mm) Oh,

SOLO [Alto]

I am here, by the phone, waiting for the call. for this long suffering to be over,

PP

PP

PP

PP

*Close slowly to "mm" over the course of three beats.
In time, \( \frac{\#}{\Delta} \approx \text{ca. } 60

Oh, go.

TUTTI

let it go, your work is done,

let it go, your work is done,

let it go, your work is done,

let it go, your work is done,
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
Even faster; fiery

S. 1
Oh, rain,

ff

S. 2
Oh,

ff

A. 1
Oh, rain,

ff

A. 2
Oh, rain,

ff

T. 1
earth, fire, cin-ders, rain,

ff

T. 2
earth, fire, rain,

ff

R. 1
earth, fire, cin-ders, rain,

ff

R. 2
earth, fire, rain,

Even faster; fiery

Pno.
Calmed; $j = \text{ca. 66}$

Oh, wait for us on the other side of the river,

Oh, wait for us on the other side of the river,
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
Sometimes Peace Comes

Text by Laura Foley

Music by Dale Trumbore

Flowing freely, with a fluid sense of time;

\( \text{q} = \text{ca. 56 or slightly faster} \)

A tempo

poco rit.

OPTIONAL SOLO(S)*

S.

\[ \text{Oo, } \]

poco rit.

A.

\[ \text{Oo, } \]

Flowing freely, with a fluid sense of time;

\( \text{q} = \text{ca. 56 or slightly faster} \)

A tempo

poco rit.

Pno.

*\( \text{m. 1-6 may be performed as written, without soloists; with a small subsection (e.g., four singers on a part, or S1s and A1s); or every time this motive appears, a different pair of treble soloists may sing it. For example, mm. 1-2 could feature a different soprano soloist and alto soloist from mm. 3-4, as would mm. 4-6. The same could apply when this motive returns in measures 24-25.} \)
Sometimes peace comes like this:
endless, and gentle and

soft and no compulsion to go any where.

*When two or more notes are in brackets, the soloist should pick either note; each note is always equally as desirable as the other(s).*
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
Solo 1

you have stepped into a place beyond time.

OPTIONAL SOLO(S)*

A.

In time; \( \frac{\text{ mf}}{\text{ mp}} \) you have stepped into a place beyond time.

OPTIONAL SOLO(S)*

Pno.

*As in m. 1, every time this motive appears (in measures 24-25, 35-36, and 40-41), a different pair of treble soloists may sing it.

**This unlicensed score is for perusal only.**
How to Go On
Sometimes Peace Comes

Solo 1

Freely, slowly

where in the endless, deep silence you

In time; \( \text{f} \) = ca. 56

Solo 1

Freely, slowly

In time; \( \text{f} \) = ca. 56

Sometimes Peace Comes

In time; \( \text{q} \) = ca. 56

Solo 1

find out what it is, what it is,

(OPT. SOLO)

Solo 1

and your part in it.

(OPT. SOLO)

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
Knowing the End

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

How to Go On

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
How to Go On
Knowing the End

In time, slightly slower; \( \frac{\text{bpm}}{\text{mm}} = \text{ca. 56} \)

S. 1

\[ \text{How can we go on?} \]

S. 2

\[ \text{How can we go on?} \]

A.

\[ \text{How can we go on?} \]

T.

\[ \text{How can we go on?} \]

B.

\[ \text{How can we go on?} \]

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
How to Go On
Knowing the End

Solo 1
SOLO [Soprano]

Solo 2
SOLO [Bass]

Solo 3

A.

T.

B.

Pno.

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
How to Go On
Knowing the End

Solo 1

Solo 2

Solo 3

A.

T.

B.

Pno.

How to Go On
Knowing the End

 haciendo el final, haciendo el final, haciendo el final,

 haciendo, haciendo, haciendo,

 haciendo, haciendo, haciendo,

 haciendo, haciendo, haciendo,

 This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
Knowing the End

Solo 1

Solo 2

Solo 3

A.

B.

T.

Pno.

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
When at last

Text by Amy Fleury

Music by Dale Trumbore

When at last I join the democracy of dirt, a tussock earthed over and

SOLO [Alto]

When at last I join the democracy of dirt, a tussock earthed over and

SOLO [Tenor]

When at last I join the democracy of dirt, a tussock earthed over and

Pno.

grass healed.

I'll gladly conspire in my own diminishment.

grass healed.

I'll gladly conspire in my own diminishment.

Slightly slower;

grass healed.

I'll gladly conspire in my own diminishment.

Slightly slower;

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
How to Go On
When at Last

Let a pink peony bloom from my chest and may it be

Let a pink peony bloom from my chest, and may it be

Oo. Oo.

Oo. Oo.

Oo. Oo.

Oo. Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
When at Last

How to Go On

vi-si-ted by a charm of bees, who will then

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Oo.

Pno.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
A little slower; \( \text{\textit{j}} = \text{ca. 56} \)

\( \text{poco rit.} \)


accel. \( \text{\textit{j}} = \text{ca. 66} \)
Solo 1

bro - ken from its comb and re - lease from its gold - en hold

Solo 2

bro - ken from its comb and re - lease from its gold - en hold

S.

Ah

A. 1

Oh

A. 2

Oh

T. 1

Oh

T. 2

Oh

B. 1

Oh

B. 2

Oh

Pno.

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
How to Go On

When at Last

A little slower; \( \frac{2}{4} = \text{ca. 50} \)

Freely

\( p \quad \text{mf} \)

my soul.

TUTTI

\( \text{pp} \quad \text{mf} \)

Oo.

TUTTI

\( \text{pp} \quad \text{mf} \)

Oo.

A little slower; \( \frac{2}{4} = \text{ca. 50} \)

Freely

This unlicensed score is for perusal only.
This page has intentionally been left blank.
Here's the next page:
How to Go On

When at Last

(Conductor slowly lowers hands)

(Duration: ca. 35 minutes)

Composed in Saratoga, WY & Los Angeles, CA,
This unlicensed score is for perusal only.