

Sure On This Shining Night
SATB, Secular

Morten Lauridsen

Morten Lauridsen
*Sure On This
Shining Night*
(James Agee)

from *Nocturnes*
SATB and piano

Sure On This Shining Night

Sure on this shining night
Of starmade shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wand'ring far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

—James Agee

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From *Nocturnes*, The ACDA 2005 Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission

Premiere performance of the *Nocturnes* at the 2005 ACDA National Convention by the
Donald Brinegar Singers and Morten Lauridsen, piano

I originally composed *Sure On This Shining Night* as the third movement for my choral cycle *Nocturnes* on poems by Rilke, Neruda and Agee. I set the verse very much like a song from the American musical theater stage and it should be sung in that manner. The first three *Nocturnes*—*Sa Nuit d'Été* (R.M. Rilke), *Soneto de la Noche* (Pablo Neruda) and *Sure On This Shining Night*—may be performed either separately or as a cycle (in that order and including the *Epilogue*). The *Epilogue: Voici le soir*, is only to be performed if the entire cycle is done, following *Sure On This Shining Night*. In that case, the final chord of *Sure On This Shining Night* is held with a fermata and then the chorus begins the *Epilogue* without a break between these two movements.

In addition to the SATB/piano, TTBB/piano and SSAA/piano versions, *Sure On This Shining Night* is available as a mixed duet with piano and also as a solo song for baritone and piano combined with Dana Gioia's "Prayer," published by Peermusic as *Two Songs on American Poems*, both recorded on "Prayer - The Songs of Morten Lauridsen." The complete *Nocturnes* are recorded on "Sure On This Shining Night - Voce Sings Lauridsen," on "Lauridsen - Mid-Winter Songs" by The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists and on the Deutsche Grammophon "Lux Aeterna - The Choral Music of Morten Lauridsen" by the Chamber Choir of Europe conducted by Nicol Matt. I accompany each of these recordings at the piano.

—Morten Lauridsen

The music of Morten Lauridsen, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, occupies a permanent place in the standard vocal repertoire of the Twenty-First Century. He was Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994-2001 and serves as Honorary Artistic President of INTERKULTUR/World Choir Games. His works, including eight vocal cycles, individual songs, choral and instrumental works and a series of sacred motets, are regularly performed throughout the world and have been recorded on over 200 CDs, several of which have received Grammy nominations. An award-winning documentary by filmmaker Michael Stillwater, *Shining Night: A Portrait of Composer Morten Lauridsen*, was released in 2012. Information about the film is at songwithoutborders.net.

Named an "American Choral Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2006, he was awarded the 2007 National Medal of Arts, the highest artistic award in the United States, by the President in a White House ceremony "for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power, and spiritual depth that have thrilled audiences worldwide." In 2016 Mr. Lauridsen received the ASCAP Foundation "Life in Music" Award at Lincoln Center.

For more about Morten Lauridsen: www.peermusicClassical.com and www.mortenlauridsen.net

Sure On This Shining Night

James Agee

Morten Lauridsen

Flowing, tempo rubato (♩ = ca. 72) *poco rit.* a tempo

Piano *p* *espressivo*

Ped.

4 *rit.* a tempo *mp*

T Sure on this shin - ing

B *mp*

A Sure on this shin - ing

a tempo

rit.

Ped.

7 *poco rit.*

night of star-made shad-ows round, kind-ness must watch for me this side—the ground, on this

night of star-made shad-ows round, kind-ness must watch for me this side—the ground, on this

poco rit.

Ped.

*Omit if the low As are out of range.

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10 *a tempo* *rit.* *a tempo*

shin - - - ing night, this shin

shin - - - ing night, this shin

a tempo *rit.* *a tempo*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

13 *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*

- - - ing night.

- - - ing night.

rit. *a tempo* *rit.*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

16 **B** *a tempo* *mp*

Sure on this shin-ing night of star-made shad-ows round, kind-ness must watch for me this

Sure on this shin-ing night of star-made shad-ows round, kind-ness must watch for me this

Sure on this shin-ing night, sure on this shin - - - ing -

Sure on this shin-ing

mp

B *a tempo*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

19

side the ground, on this shin-ing night, this

side the ground, on this shin-ing night, this

night, sure on this shin-ing night, this

night, sure on this shin-ing night, this

Ped. Ped. Ped.

rit.

22

shin-ing night.

shin-ing night.

shin-ing night.

shin-ing night.

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

a tempo *molto rit.* *a tempo*

C *mp*

*Omit if the low As are out of range.

25

T *mp* The late year lies—

B *mp* The late year lies—

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

28

(no breath)

down the north, All— is healed, all— is health. High

down the north, All— is healed, all— is health. High

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

31

S *mp* The late year lies— down the north, All— is

A *mp* The late year lies— down the north, All— is

T sum-mer holds the earth.— Hearts all whole. All— is healed,—

B sum-mer holds the earth.— Hearts all whole. All— is healed,—

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

34 (no breath) *mf*

healed, _____ all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. ^{NB}Hearts all

healed, _____ all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. ^{NB}Hearts all

_____ all is health, all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. ^{NB}Hearts all

_____ all is health, all is health. High sum-mer holds the earth. ^{NB}Hearts all

mf

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

37 *meno mosso* *rit.* **D** *a tempo* *f*

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this shin - ing,

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this

whole. _____ Sure on this shin - ing night, sure on this

meno mosso *rit.* **D** *a tempo* *f*

Ped. Ped.

40

rit. **ff** **a tempo**

shin - - ing night, sure on this shin - -

shin - - ing night, sure on this shin - -

shin - - ing night, sure on this shin - -

shin - - ing night, sure on this shin - -

rit. **ff** **a tempo**

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

43

rit. **mp** **a tempo** **p**

- ing night. I weep for won-der wan -d'ring far a - lone of

- ing night. I weep a - lone of

- ing night. I weep for won-der wan -d'ring far a - lone of

- ing night. I weep a - lone of

rit. **mp** **a tempo** **p**

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

meno mosso rit.

molto rit. molto lunga

E *Molto meno mosso, with a sense of wonder*
ppp hushed

46

shad - ows on the stars. Sure on this

shad - ows on the stars. Sure on this

shad - ows on the stars. Sure on this

shad - ows on the stars. Sure on this shin-ing

meno mosso rit.

molto rit. molto lunga (no break)

E *Molto meno mosso, with a sense of wonder*

ppp

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

49

shin-ing night, this shin - - - ing night, on this

ppp hushed

Sure on this shin - - - ing night, on this

ppp hushed

Sure on this shin-ing night, on this

night of star-made shadows round, kind-ness must watch for me this side the ground, on this

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

*Omit if the low As are out of range.

52

shin - - - ing night, this shin - -

shin - - - ing night, this shin - -

shin - - - ing night, this shin - -

shin - - - ing night, this shin - -

56

rit.

F *Meno mosso*

- - - ing night,

- - - ing night,

- - - ing night,

- - - ing night,

rit.

F *Meno mosso*

- - - ing night,

p

Ped.

Ped.

59 *meno mosso* *rit.* *molto meno mosso* *p*

sure on this shin - ing

sure on this shin - ing

sure on this shin - ing

sure on this shin - ing

meno mosso *rit.* *molto meno mosso*

Ped.

62 *Tempo I* *rit.* *molto rit.* *lunga*

night.

night.

night.

night.

Tempo I *rit.* *molto rit.* *lunga*

mp *p*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

(for Jama)
(ca. 4'45")