Midnight Sun Songs

for youth choir and piano trio

words and melodies by students in
Yellowknife, Norman Wells, Hay River,
Fort Smith, Fort Simpson and Inuvik
in the Northwest Territories, Canada

music and arrangement by
Jeffrey Ryan

commissioned by
Northern Arts and Cultural Centre
and the Gryphon Trio
as part of the Listen UP! NWT project 2015
Programme Note:

For the 2014/15 season, the Gryphon Trio partnered with the Northern Arts and Cultural Centre for a far-reaching instalment of the Trio's Listen Up! project. Students in six communities throughout Canada's Northwest Territories wrote poetry around the theme of The Elements, then worked with composers Jeffrey Ryan and Carmen Braden to develop melodies for their poetry. These melodies became the source material for Midnight Sun Songs, a collection of six songs for youth choir and piano trio composed and arranged by Jeffrey Ryan. Midnight Sun Songs received its world premiere in May 2015 at Yellowknife's Northern Arts and Cultural Centre, performed by a 70-voice youth choir comprised of students from the six participating communities, accompanied by the Gryphon Trio and conducted by Rob Kapilow.

And Morning Will Have Come is the first song of the collection, and expresses how the elements are always all around us.

Earth (Winter, Summer) is the second song of the collection, and explores the idea of Earth through the land and the seasons.

Water Dance is the third song of the collection, and explores Water through the many ways it manifests in our lives.

Air, We Need You is the fourth song of the collection, and explores the idea of Air through our dependence on it for life but also through the sensations it gives us.

Fire Song is the fifth song of the collection, and explores Fire through both its beauty and its destructive power.

The Elements We've Had Since Birth is the sixth song of the collection, and expresses how important the elements are in so many aspects of our lives.

Performance Note:

The six movements of the Midnight Sun Songs may be performed separately, or in any combination. The opening spoken chant may be performed as a processional if desired.

The piano reduction in the choral part is for rehearsal only.
MIDNIGHT SUN SONGS

AND MORNING WILL HAVE COME

words and melodies by

Simon Pittman, Tori Haogak, and Maggie Hodgson

Air, what fills our lungs with life
Fire, what heats our homes at night
Earth, what holds us up to stand
Water what quenches the thirst at hand

Awesome earth, glowing fire, hovering wind and growing water
While it is raining from above, fire erupts in a faraway land
Earth never ceasing, continues to spin
Wind flies as the night howls

The wind blows and fire glows on a dark and stormy night
As the stars shine, we leave behind our worries in the past
But soon enough the sun will rise and morning will have come

EARTH (WINTER, SUMMER)

words and melodies by

Mary-Anne Mayambo, Alisha Hardisty, and Aisling Dunn

Winter is coming
Summer is ending so soon
Time to have cocoa

Oh how lovely the winter is
White snow falling
Days are getting better and better

Green, reluctant, agile, solid and springy
As it dips and sways, it bows to the earth
and salutes the sky
Twirling and flipping by and by

Tickling your toes and itching your nose:
Grass

Green, reluctant, agile, solid and springy
A soft and squishy blanket that covers the earth:
Grass

WATER DANCE

words and melodies by

Leandra Bjornson, Savannah Beaulieu, Tyson Mistaken-Chief,
Aimee Jacobs, Kristal Gambler, Elizabeth Kikoak, and Amanda Grace Butler

Water can be as cold as the Arctic ice
Or as warm as a summer day

Water is clear
Smells like nothing
Could sound like waves
Makes you feel fresh
But it tastes like nothing

Water is me
Water comes out of my eyes
Water is like glass
Water is my drink
Water is me
I can see it hit the bottom and hear it splash
I feel calm when the water falls and the liquid flows

Shimmering water, sparkling in the sun
Freezing are your toes
You soon start to slip, laughing with your friends
Soon we are warm, memories will last

Rivers run to seas
Run to oceans, run to waterfalls
Flowing gracefully, flowing freely, on and on

Dancing past a forest
River flowing, river roaring
Dancing to the waterfall, on and on

AIR, WE NEED YOU

words and melodies by
Sage Dimsdale, Leesha Setzer, Simone Hipfner, and Ariah Thomas

Air, we need you
So we can breathe and live
We are nothing without you
We all take what you give

Feel the wind in your hair
Hear the wind and I don't care
You see the wind and I say "Where?"
Taste the wind over there

Swoosh, swoosh, goes the wind
Through my air and on my skin
Touches the sky like a bird
With a comforting feeling on its wings

Air we need you
So we can breathe and live

FIRE SONG

words and melodies by
Madison Loutit, Krish Sharma, Gabrielle Kirby, Wynter Trudeau, and Krizzia Concepcion

Destruction and heat, blazing embers destroy
This is a war of vast flames
And if this is to end in fire, then we shall all burn together

Feel the fire, the rage inside
See the smoke, it comes around you
It is just beginning

I can see it destroy and hear it roar
I feel happy when the flame burns, when the fire flickers

Dancing, burning, full of sound
Fire sparks flying around and around
The smell of burning wood dances in the air
Sparks fly, up, up, up, higher, higher
Ashes fall from the sky like a blizzard on a winter night

Dancing, burning, full of sound
Fire sparks flying around and around
Ashes fall from the sky like a blizzard in the night
THE ELEMENTS WE'VE HAD SINCE BIRTH
words and melodies by
Paige Gillis, Justin Stewart, McKenzy Mullen, Pyper Rehm, and Kelsey Robson

We might not know this, but it's true: the elements have a special job to do

Fire, water, wind and earth, the elements we've had since birth

Fire, water, wind and earth
Fire is the flame, the flame we use
Wind blows at amazing speed
And wind keeps us cool as it zooms past you like a breeze

The wood is burning and soon it will vanish
Earth's soil is so rich and its sky is so blue
It's something you need

Water wander through a lake
Fire flickers in the night sky
Wind brings spring to mind
Earth is our place of birth
We hold the elements for all we're worth

Fire can burn you, fire can be used for camp, but fire can be hot
We live on the earth, we live in harmony here, yet we die on earth
We drink lots of water, yet we pollute most of it. Keep the water clean
We breathe the air, but we also pollute the air. Keep the air clean

It flows swiftly through the trees
Whether it icy wind or breeze
Singing a song of the winds

Its solid shell and powerful stones set the ground apart
Such bold power makes tingling bones, but the beauty calms hearts
Cackling is all that is heard
Burning is all that is felt
The wickedness spreads and the innocent stand tall

The end has come but this is the new beginning
It cleanses the world
In the end, water sweeps it all away, so we no longer weep.

Without the earth, who would tend the flame?
Without the flame, who would know of pain?
Without the pain, who would know of love?
Without the love, who would have a spirit?
And without the spirit, how could we let the wind sing us all to sleep?

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Air, what fills our lungs with life. Fire, what heats our homes at night. Earth, what holds us up to stand. Water, what quenches the thirst at hand.

And Morning Will Have Come
(#1 from Midnight Sun Songs)

words and melodies by Simon Pittman, Tori Haogak, and Maggie Hodgson

music and arrangement by Jeffrey Ryan

©2015 Jeffrey Ryan and the students
Air, what fills our lungs with life.  Fire, what heats our homes at night.

Earth, what holds us up to stand.  Wa-ter, what quen-ches the thirst at hand.

Air, what fills our lungs with life.  Fire, what heats our homes at night.

on the string, fiddling
night. Earth, what holds us up to stand.

Water, what quenches the thirst at hand. Air, what fills our lungs with

life. Fire, what heats our homes at night.
Earth, what holds us up to stand. Water, what quenches the thirst at hand.

F

sub.

Air, what fills our lungs with life.

Vn

Vc

F

sub.

Earth, what heats our homes at night. Earth, what holds us up to

Vn

Vc
stand. Water, what quenches the thirst at hand. f

if processing, everyone in place by now

Air, what fills our lungs with life. Fire, what heats our homes at

night. Earth, what holds us up to stand.
Water, what quenches the thirst at hand.

most voices speak top;

some voices sing bottom;

Air!

Fire!

Earth!

Earth.
wind and growing water.

While it is raining

from above, fire erupts
- morning -

---

in a far-away land.

Earth never

continues continuing,

continues to
Howls, as the night.

Flies, morning -
Awe some earth, glowing fire.

Awe - some earth, glowing fire.

ho - ver - ing wind and growing wa - ter, wa - ter, wa - ter.

ho - ver - ing wind and growing wa - ter, wa - ter.
The wind blows and fire glows on a dark and stormy night.

As the stars shine we leave behind, we leave behind our worries.
in the past. But soon enough the sun will rise and morning will have come.
Earth (Winter, Summer)  
(#2 from Midnight Sun Songs)

words and melodies by Mary-Anne Muyambo,  
Alisha Hardisty, and Aisling Dunn

music and arrangement by Jeffrey Ryan

\(\text{Winter is coming.}
\)

\(\text{Sum-mer is ending so soon.}
\)

\(\text{Time to have co-coa.}
\)

©2015 Jeffrey Ryan and the students
Oh how lovely the winter is. White snow falling.

Days are getting better and better.

Green, revert.

(Alisha Hardisty/Fort Simpson)

(Aisling Dunn/Yellowknife)
- earth (winter, summer) -

flip-ping by and by.

Tick-ling your toes and

itch-ing your nose:

grass.

Green, re-luctant, a-gile, so-lid and spring-y.
A soft and squishy blanket that covers the earth:

- earth (winter, summer) -
Water can be as cold as the Arctic ice, or as warm as a summer day. Could sound like waves. Makes you feel fresh. But it tastes like nothing.
Wa-ter is clear. Smells like no-thing. Could sound like waves. Makes you feel fresh.

But it tastes like no-thing. Wa-ter comes out of my eyes.


Wa-ter is like glass.
But it tastes like nothing. Makes you feel fresh.

I can see it hit the bottom and hear it splash.
I feel calm when the water falls and the liquid flows. Shimmering water, sparkling in the sun. Freezing are your toes. You soon start to...
slip, laughing with your friends. Soon we are warm.

- water dance -

Molto rit. a tempo

Me-mories will last.

Ri-vers run to seas. Run to oceans, run to water-falls.

(Amanda Grace Butler/Yellowknife)
Flowing gracefully, flowing freely. On and on. Dancing past a

Forest. River flowing, river roaring. Dancing to the

Waterfall. On and on. Mm

Solo
- water dance -


Vn

Vc


Vn

Vc

Air, We Need You
(#4 from Midnight Sun Songs)

Senza misura

A tempo = 120

Vn

Vc

hold pedal down to m. 10

(Sage Dimsdale/Fort Simpson)

mf

Air, we need you

so we can breathe and

©2015 Jeffrey Ryan and the students
- air, we need you -

We are nothing live.

We all without you.

take what you give.
air, we need you -

Hear the

wind and I don't care.

You see the wind and

and


I say "Where?" Taste the wind o-
ver there.
Whoo-sh! Whoo-sh!

(slightly detached, off the string)

(Simone Hipfner/Yellowknife)

Swoosh, swoosh, _ con ped. ad lib._
goes the wind, through my hair and on my skin, touches the sky like a
Air, we need you so we can breathe.

(poco rit. — — — Meno mosso $= 96$

Tempo primo $= 120$

feeling on its wings.

(Ariah Thomas/Fort Simpson)
- air, we need you -

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Fire Song
(#5 from Midnight Sun Songs)

words and melodies by
Madison Loutit, Krish Sharma,
Gabrielle Kirby, Wynter Trudeau,
and Krizza Concepcion

music and arrangement by
Jeffrey Ryan

Senza misura, freely, a dramatic plainchant (♩ = ca. 90)
(Madison Loutit/Hay River)

Vn  Vc

De-struc-tion and heat, blaz-ing em-bers de-stroy.

This is a war of vast flames, and if this is to end in fire,

then we shall all burn to-ge-ther.

A tempo, ♩ = 120 Energetically

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fire song

(Krish Sharma/Inuvik)

Feel

the

fire.

The rage

in

side.

See the smoke,

the
smoke.

It comes____ a

round you____ It is just____

cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco

be -
I can see it de-
stroy,
and hear it roar.
I feel happy
when the
flame burns,
when the fire flickers.

(Gabrielle Kirby/Hay River)
- fire song -

(Wynter Trudeau/Fort Smith)

Dancing,

burning, full of sound.

Flying, flying all around and all around.
The smell of burning wood dances in the air.

Sparks fly, up, up, higher.

Higher, Ashes fall from the sky.
like a blizzard on a winter night, a winter night, a winter night, a

win ter night. Dan cin', burn in', full of sound.

Fi re sparks, fi re sparks, fly in' round and round.
Ashes fall from the sky, like a blizzard in the night, voices on top in the night.

- fire song -
We might not know this, but it's true. The elements have a special job to do. Fi-re, wa-ter, wind and earth, the e-le-ments we've had since birth.
Fire, water, wind and earth, the elements we've had since birth. Fire, water, wind and earth, the elements we've had since birth.

Fire, water, wind and earth, the elements we've had since birth. Had since birth.
Fi-re, wa-ter, wind and earth.

Fi-re is the flame.

the flame we use.

Wind blows at a-mazing speed.
And wind keeps us cool as it zooms past you like a breeze.
The wood is burning and soon it will vanish. Earth's soil is so rich.

and its sky is so blue. It's something you
- elements -

(McKenzy Mullen/Norman Wells)

Water wanders through a lake.

Fire flickers in the night sky.

_need_
Wind brings spring to mind. Earth is our place of birth. We hold the elements for all we're worth.
Fire can burn you, fire can be used for camp.

We live on the earth.
Keep the water clean.

We breathe the air but we also pollute the air.

Keep the air clean. Keep the air clean.
Keep the air clean. It flows swiftly through the trees, whether it icy wind or breeze.

singing a song of the winds. Its solid shell and powerful stones
set the ground apart. Such bold power makes tingling bones,

but the beauty calms hearts. Cackling is all that is heard.

Burning is all that is felt. The wickedness spreads
and the in no-cent stand tall.

The end has come but this is the new begin-ning. It cleans-es the world. In the

end, wa-ter sweeps it all a-way, so we no-long-er weep.

With-out the earth, who would

solo, spoken
(or small group)

The end has come but this is the new begin-ning. It cleans-es the world. In the

solo, spoken
(or small group)
solo or small group, sung

Who would tend the flame?  With-out the flame, who would know of tend the flame?

Who would know of pain?  With-out the pain, who would know of love?  With-out the love, who would

Who would have a spirit?  And with-out the spirit, how could we let the

(if previous passage was solo, add more voices to upper line from here)
wind sing us all to sleep? stagger breathe

\[ \begin{align*}
V_n & \quad V_c \\
\end{align*} \]