

jeffrey ryan

paint the light



for SATB choir a cappella

*commissioned by Soundstreams Canada
with the assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation*

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Performance notes:

1. Total performance time ca. 6'15"
2.  note ends with a short, sharp breath accent
3.  give note a slight rhythmic and dynamic stress
4. All glissandi should begin immediately after the first pitch is sounded; glissandi of duration greater than a quarter note are notated with an opening eighth note along with the required duration. All glissandi should be brought out slightly.

Programme note:

When talking about music, we often borrow words from visual art to describe sounds. We speak of orchestral “colours,” of “brightness” or “darkness,” and so on. I often think of orchestrators as “colourists” and one of the things that interests me as a composer is to focus on the transformation of colours within a piece of music.

In searching for a subject for this short choral work, I found myself turning to my fascination with colours. I find it so intriguing that, just as each of us hears a piece of music uniquely, we similarly have no way of knowing whether we all see exactly the same thing when we look at a particular colour. In this sense, the piece celebrates the experience of both the individual and the collective, as it celebrates the gathering of individuals into a collective musical unit.

And so, ***paint the light*** is inspired by colour, particularly the continuum between black and white, and the idea that black is created by the complete absorption of light while white is created by the complete reflection of light. The initial state of blackness is not a void, but rather a storehouse for the many colours of light, or perhaps it can be thought of as “potential light.” In the course of the piece, a panoply of different colours is added to the black until, full to bursting, it explodes into white light.

paint the light also evokes the image of the artist's palette, covered in daubs of colour, which are swirled and mixed together — colours that come alive in a constant state of motion. The text is essentially a series of different colour names and other colour-related words — each word chosen more for its rhythm and sound quality than for a logical progression of dark to light, or to create groupings of like colours. The initial slow section gradually accelerates into the main dancing tempo, which explores different registers and vocal combinations as the music methodically rises higher and higher.

paint the light was commissioned by Soundstreams Canada (Lawrence Cherney, Artistic Director) with the assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation. It received its world première performance on November 5, 2000, by the combined choirs of the University of Alberta, the University of Manitoba, McGill University, and Memorial University of Newfoundland, conducted by Robert Sund, as part of *University Voices 2000* at Massey Hall in Toronto, Canada.

paint the light

(jeffrey ryan)

Black darkness, keeping light
Black shadow, seizing light
Black blackness, making light

Yellow in
Red in
Blue
Green in
White
Light

Colour and shade and shadow and hue and tone
Scarlet, sienna, cerulean, emerald, sapphire
Colour and shade and shadow
Violet, amethyst, indigo, orange, vermilion
Colour and shade and shadow and hue and tone
And shadow

Colour in red green brown
Colour in blue gold bronze silver
Colour in colour

Colour and shade and shadow and hue and tone
Glowing and gleaming, refracting and streaming and shining
Colour and shade and shadow
Flickering, shimmering, glittering, glistening light

Breathe in light
Breathe out light
Breathing light

Purple, copper, turquoise, cobalt
Bending, reflecting, illuminating, blazing

Colour and shade and shadow and hue and tone
Olive, magenta, cadmium, amber, saffron
Colour and shade and shadow and hue and tone
Sepia, crimson, ivory, azure sky

Colour and shade
Shadow and
Colour and shade
Colour and tone
Colour and hue
Colour and shadow

Iridescent, phosphorescent

Colour and shade and shadow and hue and tone
Purple and pink and beige and yellow and gold
Indigo, amber, ultramarine, magenta
Silver, cerulean, orange, viridian, white

Colour and shade and shadow and hue and tone
Violet, indigo, blue and green and yellow and orange and red and gold and silver, sienna, magenta
Combining
Intensifying

Making light
Mixing light
Painting light

paint the light

jeffrey ryan

1 $\bullet = 54$ *Misterioso*

S

A *p*

T *p*

B *p*

Black dark - ness

Black dark - ness

Black

Black

6

S *p* *mp* *mp*

A *mp* *mp*

T *mp* *mp*

B *mp* *mp*

keep - ing light

Black dark - ness

Black

keep - ing

Black

sha - dow

Black

Black

11 *sempre*

S *mf* *mf* *sfp* *ff*

A *mf* *mf* *sfp* *ff*

T *mf* *mf* *sfp* *ff*

B *mf* *mf* *sfp* *ff*

seiz - ing light

Black black - ness

mak - ing light

seiz - ing

Black black - ness

mak - ing light

Black black - ness

mak - ing light

accel. poco a poco . . .

15 *ff mf sub.* *ff mf* *mf*

S Yel low in Red in Blue

A Yel low in Red in Blue

T Black dark-ness Black sha-dow Red

B Black black-ness Black sha-dow Red

f sempre *f sempre*

(accel.)

20 *f* *mf*

S Green in

A Green in

T in Blue and Green in

B in Blue and Green in

25 *ff p* *f* *ff p* *f* *ff p* *ff*

S White White White

A White White White

T White White White

B White White White

ff p *f* *ff p* *f* *ff p* *ff*

♩ = 96 (♩ = 144) Dancelike

31 *p* crisply

S Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

A *p*

T White *p* crisply Light

B Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

35

S Scar - let, si - en - na, ce - ru - le - an, e - mer - ald, sa - pphire

A sa - pphire

T Scar - let, si - en - na, ce - ru - le - an, e - mer - ald, sa - pphire

B Scar - let, si - en - na, ce - ru - le - an, e - mer - ald, sa - pphire

39

S Co - lour and shade and sha - dow

A Co - lour and shade and sha - dow

T Co - lour and shade and sha - dow

B Co - lour and shade and sha - dow

mf *p*

44

p *f*

S Vi - o - let, a - me - thyst, in - di - go, o - range, ver mi - lion.

A Vi - o - let, a - me - thyst, in - di - go, o - range, ver mi - lion.

T Vi - o - let, a - me - thyst, in - di - go, o - range, ver mi - lion.

B Vi - o - let, a - me - thyst, in - di - go, o - range, ver mi - lion.

48

f

S Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone.

A Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone.

T Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone.

B Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone.

52

p *mf* *p*

S — and sha - dow

A — and sha - dow

T — and sha - dow

B — and sha - dow

56 *pp* *ff*

S *pp* *f* *mf insistently*

A *pp* *f* *mf insistently*
Co - lour in,

T *pp* *f* *mf insistently*
Co - lour in,

B *pp* *f* *ff*

60 *f*

S *f* *mf sub.*

A *f sub.* *mf sub.*
co - lour in, co - lour in, red, Co - lour in,

T *f* *mf*
co - lour in, co - lour in, red, Co - lour in,

B *f*
red,

64 *sfp* *f*

S *sfp* *f*
green, green, green,

A *sfp* *f*
co - lour in, co - lour in, co - lour in, green, green,

T *sfp* *f*
co - lour in, co - lour in, co - lour in, green, green,

B *sfp* *f*
green, green,

68

S *f*
brown,

A *mf*
Co-lour in, *f* brown, *mf sub.* Co-lour in, co-lour in,

T *mf sub.* Co-lour in, co-lour in, *f sub.* brown, *mf* Co-lour in, co-lour in,

B *f*
brown,

72

S *f* blue, *f* gold, *f* bronze, *mf* sil - ver

A *f* blue, *f* gold, *mf* Co-lour in, *f sub.* bronze, *mf sub.* co - lour in, sil - ver

T *f sub.* blue, *mf sub.* Co-lour in, *f sub.* gold, *f* bronze, *mf sub.* co - lour in, sil - ver

B *f* blue, *f* gold, *f* bronze, *mf* sil - ver

76

S *ff* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*
Co-lour in, co - lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in,

A *ff* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*
Co-lour in, co - lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in,

T *ff* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*
Co-lour in, co - lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in,

B *ff* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*
Co-lour in, co - lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in, co - lour in, co-lour in,

80

S
co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co - lour co - lour Co -

A
co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour co - lour co-lour Co -

T
co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour co - lour co-lour Co -

B
co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co-lour in, co - lour co - lour Co -

f *gl.*

85

S
lour tone

A
lour tone

T
lour Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone

B
lour Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone

p *mf* *pp*

90

S
hue

A
hue

T
Glow-ing and gleam-ing, re - fract - ing and stream-ing and shin - ing

B
Glow-ing and gleam-ing, re - fract - ing and stream-ing and shin - ing

mf *pp* *div. p*

94

S *mf* shade sha - dow

A *mf* shade sha - dow

T *mf* Co - lour and shade and sha - dow

B *mf* Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade and sha - dow

98

S *f unis.* shim - mer - ing, glist - en - ing light Breathe in light

A *f unis.* shim - mer - ing, glist - en - ing light Breathe in light

T *f* Flick - er - ing, glit - ter - ing, glist - en - ing light Breathe in light

B *f* Flick - er - ing, glit - ter - ing, glist - en - ing light Breathe in light

102

S *sfp* Breathe out light Breath - ing light

A *sfp* Breathe out light Breath - ing light

T *sfp* Breathe out light Breath - ing light

B *sfp* Breathe out light Breath - ing light

107

ff *f p* *pp* *f p* *pp*

S Pur-ple, cop - per,

A white, white,

T Pur-ple, cop - per,

B white, white,

113

f p *pp* *f p* *mf*

S tur - quoise, co - balt Bend - ing, re -

A white, white, Bend - ing, re -

T tur - quoise, co - balt Bend - ing, re -

B white, white, Bend - ing, re -

119

S flect - ing, il - lu - min - a - ting,

A flect - ing, il - lu - min - a - ting,

T flect - ing, il - lu - min - a - ting,

B flect - ing, il - lu - min - a - ting,

126 *pp*

S
blaz - ing

A
pp
blaz - ing

T
pp
blaz - ing

B
pp
blaz - ing

134 *n.* *div. pp (a little detached)*

S
Co - lour and shade and

A
n. *div. pp (a little detached)*
Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and

T
n. *div. pp (a little detached)*
Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and

B
n. *div. pp (a little detached)*
Co - lour and shade and

138 *mf* *pp*

S
sha - dow and hue and tone *gl.*

A
mf tone *pp*

T
mf tone *pp*

B
mf sha - dow and hue and tone *gl.* *pp*

143

pp *mf* *pp*

S O - live, ma - gen - ta, cad - mi - um, am - ber, saf - fron

A O - live, ma - gen - ta, cad - mi - um, am - ber, saf - fron

T O - live, ma - gen - ta, cad - mi - um, am - ber, saf - fron

B O - live, ma - gen - ta, cad - mi - um, am - ber, saf - fron

149

pp sempre

S Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

A Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

T Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

B Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

155

pp

S Se - pi - a, crim - son, iv - o - ry, a - zure sky

A Se - pi - a, crim - son, iv - o - ry, a - zure sky

T Se - pi - a, crim - son, iv - o - ry, a - zure sky

B Se - pi - a, crim - son, iv - o - ry, a - zure sky

160 *ff* *unis. ff*

S Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade

A Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade

T Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade

B Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade

Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade shad - ow and

164

S Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade shad - ow and

A Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade shad - ow and

T Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade

B Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade

168

S Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and

A Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and

T Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade *sfp*

B Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade *sfp*

Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade Co - lour and shade

172 *sfp* *ff* *pp*

S shade

A shade

T shade

B *pp div.* Co-lour and

178 *div. pp < mf* *pp < mf*

S shade

A shade

T

B *pp* *pp* Co-lour and

183 *pp < mf*

S hue

A hue

T *pp* *pp* Co-lour and

B *pp* *pp* Co-lour and

187

pp *mf* *f*

S sha - dow ir - i -

A sha - dow ir - i -

T Co - lour, shade and shad - ow and... ir - i -

B Co - lour, shade and shad - ow and... ir - i -

191

mf *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *sfp* *ff* (quasi gliss.)

S de - scent, phos - pho re - scent

A de - scent, phos - pho re - scent

T de - scent, phos pho re - scent

B de - scent, phos - pho re - scent

196 *unis. f*

S Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone Pur-ple and pink and

A Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone Pur-ple and pink and

T Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone Pur-ple and pink and

B Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone Pur-ple and pink and

201

S
A
T
B

beige and yel-low and gold In-di-go, am-ber, ul-tra-ma-rine, ma-

beige and yel-low and gold In-di-go, am-ber, ul-tra-ma-rine, ma-

beige and yel-low and gold In-di-go, am-ber, ul-tra-ma-rine, ma-

beige and yel-low and gold In-di-go, am-ber, ul-tra-ma-rine, ma-

206

S
A
T
B

gen-ta Sil-ver, ce-ru-le-an, o-range, vi-ri-di-an, white

gen-ta Sil-ver, ce-ru-le-an, o-range, vi-ri-di-an, white

gen-ta Sil-ver, ce-ru-le-an, o-range, vi-ri-di-an, white

gen-ta Sil-ver, ce-ru-le-an, o-range, vi-ri-di-an, white

211

ff

S
A
T
B

Co-lour and Co-lour and shade and shade and sha-dow

Co-lour and Co-lour and shade and shade and sha-dow

Co-lour and Co-lour and shade and shade and sha-dow

Co-lour and Co-lour and shade and shade and sha-dow

216

S Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and sha-dow and hue— hue and

A Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and sha-dow and hue— hue and

T Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and sha-dow and hue— hue and

B Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and sha-dow and hue— hue and

220

S tone— *gl.* Vi - o - let, *pp*

A tone— *gl.* *pp* Vi - o - let, in - di - go,

T tone— *gl.* *pp* Vi - o - let, in - di - go, blue and

B tone— *gl.* *pp* Vi - o - let, in - di - go, blue and green and

225

S in - di - go, blue and green and yel - low and o - range and red and gold com - bin - ing, in

A blue and green and yel - low and o - range and red and gold and sil - ver, com - bin - ing, in

T green and yel - low and o - range and red and gold and sil - ver, si en - na, com - bin - ing, in

B yel - low and o - range and red and gold and sil - ver, si - en - na, ma - gen - ta, com - bin - ing, in -

Joyously

229

f

S ten - si - fy - ing Mak - ing light Mix - ing light

A ten - si - fy - ing Mak - ing light Mix - ing light

T ten - si - fy - ing Mak - ing light Mix - ing light

B ten - si - fy - ing Mak - ing light Mix - ing light

234

ff

S Paint - ing light! Light! Light!

A Paint - ing light! Light! Light! *< ff*

T Paint - ing light! Light! Light! *< ff*

B Paint - ing light! Light! Light! *< ff*