

jeffrey ryan

paint the light



for SATB choir and piano

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

Perusal Copy

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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*
Black Black dark - ness

T *p*
Black dark - ness Black dark - ness

B *p*
Black Black

1 $\bullet = 54$ *Misterioso*

6 *p* *mp* *mp*

S keep - ing light Black sha - dow

A Black dark - ness Black

T Black keep - ing Black sha - dow

B Black Black

6 *mp*

11 *mf* *mf* *sfp* *ff*

S seiz - ing light Black black - ness mak - ing light

A seiz - ing Black black - ness mak - ing light

T Black black - ness mak - ing light

B Black mak - ing light

11 *mf* *mf* *sfp* *ff*

mf *mf* *sfp* *ff*

Red.

15 *ff* *mf sub.* *ff* *mf* *mf* *accel. poco a poco ...*

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

15 *f sempre* *accel. poco a poco ...*

(accel.)

20 *f* *mf*

S Green in

A Green Green in

T in Blue and Green in

B in Blue and Green in

(accel.)

20

$\text{♩} = 72$

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

$\text{♩} = 72$

25 *ff*

Red.

♩ = 96 (♩ = 144) Dancelike

♩ = 96 (♩ = 144)

31

p crisply

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

A *p* White Light

T *p* crisply Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

B *p* crisply Co - lour and shade and sha - dow and hue and tone

31

♩ = 96 (♩ = 144) Dancelike

♩ = 96 (♩ = 144)

p

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

35

39

S Co-lour and shade and sha-dow *mf* *p*

A Co-lour and shade and sha-dow *mf* *p*

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

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

Co-lour and shade and sha-dow

44

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

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

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

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

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

48 *f*

52 *p* *mf* *p*

S — and sha - dow

A *p* *mf* *p*
— and sha - dow

T *p* *mf* *p*
— and sha - dow

B *p* *mf* *p*
— and sha - dow

52

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* *ff*

56 *f marcato*

(Red.)

60 *f* *f* *f* *mf sub.* *mf*

S red, *f* *f* *mf sub.*

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

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

B *f* red,

60 *f*

64

S

A

T

B

co - lour in, co - lour in, co - lour in, green, green, green, green,

sfp \triangleleft *f*

sfp \triangleleft *f*

sfp \triangleleft *f*

sfp \triangleleft *f*

64

68

S

A

T

B

Co-lour in, brown, Co-lour in, co-lour in, brown, Co-lour in, co-lour in, brown,

mf

f

mf sub.

mf sub.

f sub.

mf

f

68

72 *f* *f* *f* *mf*

S blue, gold, bronze, sil - ver

A blue, gold, Co - lour in, bronze, co - lour in, sil - ver

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

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

72

76 *ff* *pp* *cresc. poco a poco*

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,

76 *ff*

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 -

80

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

85

mf (like a tamtam)

90

S *div. p*
hue

A *p*
hue

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

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

90

94

S *mf*
shade sha - dow

A *div. 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

94

98

f unis.

S — shimmer - ing, — glist - en - ing light Breathe in — light

A — shimmer - ing, — glist - en - ing light Breathe in — light

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

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

98

102

sfp

S — Breathe out — light — Breath - ing — light *sfp*

A — Breathe out — light — Breath - ing — light *sfp*

T — Breathe out — light — Breath - ing — light *sfp*

B — Breathe out — light — Breath - ing — light *sfp*

102

f

107

S *ff* *f p* *pp* *f p* *pp*
Pur-ple, cop-per,

A *ff* *p* *pp* *p*
white, white,

T *ff* *f p* *pp* *f p* *pp*
Pur-ple, cop-per,

B *ff* *p* *pp* *p*
white, white,

107

p bell-like

113

S *f p* *pp* *f p* *mf*
tur-quoise, co-balt Bend-ing, re -

A *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *mf*
white, white, Bend-ing, re -

T *f p* *pp* *f p* *mf*
tur-quoise, co-balt Bend-ing, re -

B *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *mf*
white, white, Bend-ing, re -

113

mf

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

S
pp
blaz - ing

A
pp
blaz - ing

T
pp
blaz - ing

B
pp
blaz - ing

126

(*mf*) *p*



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

134 *p bell-like*

138 *mf* *pp*

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

A *mf* *pp* tone

T *mf* *pp* tone

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

138

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

143

p

149

pp sempre *gl.*

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

149

p

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

pp

155

p

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 shad - ow and

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

ff *unis. ff*

160

ff

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 Co-lour and shade *sfp*

B Co-lour and shade 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

168

172 *sfp* *ff* *gl.* *pp*

S shade *sfp* *ff* *gl.* *pp*

A shade *sfp* *ff* *gl.* *pp*

T *sfp* *ff* *gl.* *pp*

B *sfp* *ff* *gl.* *pp*

176 *div. pp* *mf*

S shade *div. pp* *mf*

A shade *div. pp* *mf*

T *pp* *pp* Co - lour and

B *pp* *pp* Co - lour and

180

S *pp* *mf*
tone

A *pp* *mf*
tone

T *pp* *pp* Co-lour and

B *pp* *pp* Co-lour and

180

p

Sva - -

184

S *pp* *mf*
hue

A *pp* *mf*
hue

T *pp* *pp* Co-lour and

B *pp* *pp* Co-lour and

184

loco *Sva - -*

loco *Sva - -*

p

p

188

S ir - i - de - scent, *mf* < *f* \wedge

A ir - i - de - scent, *mf* < *f* \wedge

T Co - lour, shade and shad - ow and... *pp* *mf* < *f* \wedge *mf* < *f* \wedge

B Co - lour, shade and shad - ow and... *pp* *mf* < *f* \wedge *mf* < *f* \wedge

(*8va*) - - -

188

192 *mf* < *f* \wedge *mf* < *sfp* *ff* \wedge

S phos - pho - re - scent. (*quasi gliss.*)

A phos - pho - re - scent. (*quasi gliss.*) *ff* \wedge

T phos - pho - re - scent. *ff* \wedge

B phos - pho - re - scent. *ff* \wedge

192

196 *unis. f*

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

A *unis. f* Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone

T *unis. f* Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone

B *unis. f* Co-lour and shade and sha-dow and hue and tone

196 *ff*

200

S Pur-ple and pink and beige and yel-low and gold

A Pur-ple and pink and beige and yel-low and gold

T Pur-ple and pink and beige and yel-low and gold

B Pur-ple and pink and beige and yel-low and gold

200

204

S In - di - go, am - ber, ul - tra - ma - rine, ma - gen - ta

A In - di - go, am - ber, ul - tra - ma - rine, ma - gen - ta

T In - di - go, am - ber, ul - tra - ma - rine, ma - gen - ta

B In - di - go, am - ber, ul - tra - ma - rine, ma - gen - ta

204

208

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

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

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

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

208

212 *ff*

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

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

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

B 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 tone

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

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

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

221

pp

S Vi - o - let, in - di - go, blue and

A Vi - o - let, in - di - go, blue and green and

T Vi - o - let, in - di - go, blue and green and yel - low and

B Vi - o - let, in - di - go, blue and green and yel - low and o - range and

221

ff

And.

226

S green and yel - low and o - range and red and gold com - bin - ing, in - ten - si - fy - ing

A yel - low and o - range and red and gold and sil - ver, com - bin - ing, in - ten - si - fy - ing

T o - range and red and gold and sil - ver, si - en - na, com - bin - ing, in - ten - si - fy - ing

B red and gold and sil - ver, si - en - na, ma - gen - ta, com - bin - ing, in - ten - si - fy - ing

226

p *f*

Joyously

230

S *f* Mak - ing - light Mix - ing - light Paint - ing - light!

A *f* Mak - ing - light Mix - ing - light Paint - ing - light!

T *f* Mak - ing - light Mix - ing - light Paint - ing - light!

B *f* Mak - ing - light Mix - ing - light Paint - ing - light!

230

Joyously

f

Red.

235

S *ff* Light! Light!

A *ff* Light! Light!

T *ff* Light! Light!

B *ff* Light! Light!

235

f poss.