

Sam C Henderson

INVITATION TO LOVE

SSAATTBB

Invitation to Love

for SSAATTBB, a cappella

by Sam C Henderson

Program Notes

Come when the nights are bright with stars
Or come when the moon is mellow;
Come when the sun his golden bars
Drops on the hay-field yellow.
Come in the twilight soft and gray,
Come in the night or come in the day,
Come, O love, whene'er you may,
And you are welcome, welcome.

You are sweet, O Love, dear Love,
You are soft as the nesting dove.
Come to my heart and bring it to rest
As the bird flies home to its welcome nest.

Come when my heart is full of grief
Or when my heart is merry;
Come with the falling of the leaf
Or with the redd'ning cherry.
Come when the year's first blossom blows,
Come when the summer gleams and glows,
Come with the winter's drifting snows,
And you are welcome, welcome.

- Paul Laurence Dunbar

Invitation to Love is a straightforward setting in the style of the late Stephen Paulus' The Road Home interspersed with expressive freeform interludes. The snapshots of musical scenery highlight the evocation of the text, never to distract from its raw meaning. The stars, the moon, the sun, the nesting dove, the leaf, the redd'ning cherry one effortlessly falls in love with the world Dunbar creates. All there is left to do is accept the invitation.

Duration: approx. 4'

Performance Notes

"Love" and "Bird," pages 2-3, 5, are the non-metered, uncoordinated sections of the piece. These sections serve as spontaneous, freeform expressions born from the poem, as if each singer in their own way is accepting the invitation of love and further attuning with nature and harmony. They are to be sung with a certain freedom and individuality, the material inspiring one's own song to then join in a chorus of other songs. Each individual should perform their part within its stated tempo range, accelerating and decelerating freely as one feels in the moment. At the end of each section, each performer should hold their note until everyone else has arrived on the same chord.

Overall, this piece should be cherished in performance with the same reverence as a hymn. I have set out to uphold the simple beauty and heartfelt emotion laid bare in Dunbar's work, ensuring that in the sections of strict setting, his voice resonates the clearest and boldest and I wish for all performers to hold the same approach.

Love

No Meter, All Singers Independent

Musical score for six voices (S1, S2, A, T, B1, B2) in 2/4 time, 3 flats. The score consists of two systems of music.

System 1:

- S1:** Dynamics mp , tempo $(\text{♩} = 140-150)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by a series of eighth notes. The lyrics "la la la la la la la la Love," are repeated twice.
- S2:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 120-130)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- A:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 130-140)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- T:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 130-140)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "la la la la la la la la Love, — Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- B1:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 120-130)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- B2:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 140-150)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — la la la la la la la la Love, — Love, —" are repeated.

System 2: (Continues from System 1, starting at measure 17)

- S1:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 140-150)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "la la la la la la la la Love, — la la la la la la la la Love, —" are repeated.
- S2:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 120-130)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- A:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 130-140)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- T:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 130-140)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "la la la la la la la la Love, — Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- B1:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 120-130)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — Love, —" are repeated.
- B2:** Dynamics mf , tempo $(\text{♩} = 140-150)^*$. Part starts with a rest, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics "Love, — la la la la la la la la Love, — Love, —" are repeated.

*m. 17 and m. 30 are non-metered and uncoordinated. Each individual should perform their part within its stated tempo range, accelerating and decelerating freely, independently and asynchronously from each other. Once a part has reached its final note, the note is to be held until all parts arrive at the same position.

S 1

S 2

20 A

T

B 1

B 2

come, —————— come, —————— come —————— (mm)

Love, —————— come, —————— come, —————— come —————— (mm)

Love, —————— Love, —————— come, come, come, come, come, —————— come —————— (mm)

Love, —————— come, —————— come, —————— come, —————— come, —————— come —————— (mm)

Love, —————— Love, —————— come, —————— come, —————— come, —————— come —————— (mm)

—————— come, —————— come, —————— come, —————— come —————— (mm)

Invitation to Love

Tempo I°

18

S: you are wel - come. Love (v) Love (v)

A 1: you are wel - come. You are sweet, O Love, dear Love, Love (v)

A 2: you are wel - come. Love (v) You are soft as the nest - ing

T: 8 you are wel - come. Love (v) You are soft as the nest - ing

B 1: you are wel - come. You are sweet, O Love, dear Love, Love (v)

B 2: you are wel - come. Love (v) Love (v)

24

S: — come (m) home (m)

A 1: — Come to my heart and bring it to rest home (m)

A 2: — dove. come (m)

T 1: 8 dove. come (m) as the bird flies home to its wel-come nest.

T 2: 8 dove. come (m) hone (m)

B 1: — Come to my heart and bring it to rest home (m)

B 2: — come (m) home (m)

Bird

No Meter, All Singers Independent

Musical score for "Bird" featuring eight vocal parts (S1, S2, A, T1, T2, B1, B2) in 3/2 time signature. The score includes dynamic markings like frr, ooh, and mm, and tempo changes (e.g., 130-140 BPM). The vocal parts sing independently without a common meter.

Instrumentation: 8 voices (S1, S2, A, T1, T2, B1, B2)

Time Signature: 3/2

Tempo: (♩ = 130-140)

Dynamics: frr, ooh, mm

Performance Instructions: No Meter, All Singers Independent

Invitation to Love

Tempo I°

*ppp**p*

31 S 1 Come when my heart is full of grief
ppp Come *p*
S 2 Come when my heart is full of grief
ppp Come *p*
A 1 Come when my heart is full of grief
ppp Come *p*
A 2 Come when my heart is full of grief
ppp Come *p*
T 1 8 Come when my heart is full of grief Or when my heart is mer - ry;
ppp *p*
T 2 8 Come when my heart is full of grief Or when my heart is mer - ry, mer - ry;
ppp *pp*
B 1 my heart is full of grief my heart is mer - ry;
ppp *pp*
B 2 heart is full of grief my heart

36 S 1 with the fall - ing of the leaf, *mp* *mf*
S 2 with the fall - ing of the leaf, Or with the redd' - ning cher - ry. Come *mp*
A 1 with the fall - ing of the leaf, the fall - ing of the leaf, Or with the redd' - ning cher - ry. Come *mf*
A 2 with the fall - ing of the leaf, the fall - ing of the leaf, with the redd' - ning cher - ry. Come *mf*
T 1 8 the fall - ing of the leaf, with the redd' - ning cher - ry. Come *mp* *mf*
T 2 8 the fall - ing of the leaf, with the redd' - ning cher - ry. Come *mp* *mf*
B 1 the fall - ing leaf, the redd' - ning cher - ry. Come *mp* *mf*
B 2 the fall - ing leaf, the redd' - ning cher - ry. Come *mp* *mf*

Invitation to Love

7

40 *mf*

S 1 Come blos - som blows, the sum - - - - mer gleams and

S 2 when the year's first blos - som blows, the blos - som blows, Come when the sum - mer gleams and glows, the sum - mer gleams and

A 1 when the year's first blos - som blows, the blos - som blows, Come when sum - mer gleams and glows, the sum - mer gleams and

A 2 when the year's first blos - som blows, the year's first blos - som blows, the sum - mer gleams and glows, the sum - mer gleams and

T 1 8 when the year's first blos - som blows, the year's first blos - som blows, gleams and glows, the sum - mer gleams and

T 2 8 when the year's first blos - som blows, the year's first blos - som blows, gleams and glows,

B 1 when the year's first blos - som blows, Come when the sum - mer gleams and glows,

B 2 when the year's first blos - som blows, Come when the sum - mer gleams and glows, gleams and glows,

44 *sub mp*

S 1 glows,

S 2 glows,

A 1 *sub mp* glows, *p*
And

A 2 *sub mp* glows, *p*
And

T 1 8 *sub mp* glows, *p*
And

T 2 8 *sub mp* win - ter's snows, *p*
And

B 1 *sub mp* win - ter's snows, *p*
And

B 2 *sub mp* Come with the win - ter's drift - ing snows,

Invitation to Love

Musical score for "Invitation to Love" featuring eight vocal parts (S1, S2, A1, A2, T1, T2, B1, B2) in 3/4 time with a key signature of three sharps. The score includes lyrics "you are welcome (mm)" and dynamic markings like **p** and **pp**. The vocal parts are arranged in two staves: S1, S2, A1, A2 in the top staff; T1, T2, B1, B2 in the bottom staff.

48

S 1

p

($\alpha=\alpha$)

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel... wel - come.

S 2

p

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel... wel - come.

A 1

p

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel - come.

A 2

p

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel - come.

T 1

p

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel... wel - come.

T 2

p

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel... wel - come.

B 1

p

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel... wel - come.

B 2

p

you are wel - come (mm)

you are wel... wel - come.