

No one asked me

SSA with piano

laura hawley

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CANADA

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Text based on Creative Reflections from the Sonic Timelapse Project

No one asked me if I wanted everything to change
One day blends into the next in a slow motion fast forward
Each time I face the fear I need to turn away again
No one asked me

I am strong, yet moving with the wind,
But then I'm lost, not knowing when I'll find my way again.
One moment I'm inspired, the next I'm overwhelmed.
I'm grateful and I'm frightened and I don't know where I'm going

Refrain:

I feel it all,
Can you hear me?
I feel it all,
Will you need me?
Can you tell me who I am? When can I take your hand?
I feel it all.

I feel as if my roots are being torn and shifting in the wind
Don't touch, don't breathe, don't sing to me.
I dream of the joy of dancing carelessly again
No one asked me.

I am strong, and facing all the pain,
But then I'm lost, not knowing when I'll find my way again.
It's out of my control – I'm fragile then I'm brave,
I'm empty and I'm hopeful and I don't know where I'm going.

[Refrain]

I believe I'm in the right place at the right time.
We're connected in ways no one can see
Powerless to change, building resilience
When will we find our way?

I am strong, yet moving with the wind,
And when I'm lost, I know that I will find my way again.

I feel it all
Can you hear me?
I feel it all
Can you see me?
Can you tell me who I am? When can I take your hand?
I feel it all.

Duration: 4:00

Commissioned by Chris Bowman (Cantabile Choral Society), Andrew McAnerney (Cantata Singers of Ottawa), Gregg Rainville (Canadian Men's Chorus), Leonard Ratzlaff (Richard Eaton Singers), Timothy Shantz (Luminous Voices), Kari Turunen (Vancouver Chamber Choir), Michael Zaugg (Pro Coro Canada) and the Sonic Timelapse Project.

The Sonic Timelapse Project is a collaborative choral art commissioning project created as a response to the global COVID-19 pandemic with the goal of gathering content from the emotional landscape of choral communities in Canada and beyond. Using an innovative crowdfunding model, this project brings together shared creativity and financial resources in a time of need to fund the creation of **10 new works** as well as support online programming for participating choirs. This Project was founded by Katerina Gimon, Laura Hawley, and Geung Kroeker-Lee with the support of Prairie Voices Inc.

Composer's notes

The first round of Creative Reflections submitted to Sonic Timelapse came from Canadian choral conductors who shared openly about their emotional landscape at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (spring and summer, 2020). The Sonic Timelapse composers were given access to these reflections and were asked to use them as inspiration for our new works. These submissions, plus one chorister submission from autumn 2020, provided the inspiration and text for *No one asked me*.

In my work as a composer, I've never attempted to create my own text before; I'm used to working with poetry or prose or some kind of otherwise already-completed text. For this project, I couldn't decide which Creative Reflection to focus on for my piece, and I was at first intimidated by the idea of creating a text that captured what I wanted this piece to say. I printed out the whole collection of Creative Reflections, and realized that the material was already there, and that there was substantial overlap in what each person was expressing. I started circling bits of text that stood out for me, and cut them out with scissors, mixing together different statements from each contributor, and soon a narrative began to emerge that pointed to the roller coaster of emotions each contributor seemed to describe in their Creative Reflection. That is what this piece is about – the complex and intense spectrum of feelings and emotions associated with the first eight months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the confusion around identity, the feeling of isolation, and longing to be together with others to sing, to laugh, to dance, or just to take someone's hand.

I found myself looking for direct delivery of text and sharing of phrases between parts in the choir to heighten the expressive drama and play with the duality between a sense of communication and a sense of isolation. I hope the wonderfully crunchy chords feel great to sing, and at the same time, this piece could also be performed entirely in unison with piano if the circumstances called for it.

For me, when I sing this, I can't help thinking of each conductor and chorister whose words ended up in the piece – these people and their Creative Reflections play in my mind like a slide show as I sing, which brings me closer to them, even as we are far away.

~laura hawley

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Text adapted from the
Sonic Timelapse Project

SSA with piano*

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$\text{♩} = 72$

Soprano
No one asked me if I want-ed ev-ery-thing — to change

Alto
One day blends in - to the next

Piano
p

7

S
Each time I face the fear I need to turn a-way a-gain

A
in a slow mo-tion fast for-ward

Pno.

13

S
no one asked me no one asked me... I am strong, — yet mo - ving with the wind,

A
no one asked me no one asked me... I am strong, — yet mo - ving with the wind,

Pno.
mp

A

*Also available for TTBB with piano and SATB with piano

No one asked me

2

19

S *mf* *mp*
but then I'm lost not know-ing when I'll find my way a-gain. One mo-ment I'm in-

A *mf* *mp*
but then I'm lost not know-ing when I'll find my way a-gain. One mo-ment I'm in-

Pno. *mf* *mp*

24

S
spired, the next I'm o-ver-whelmed. I'm grate-ful and I'm fright-ened and I don't know where I'm go - ing. I

A
spired, the next I'm o-ver-whelmed. I'm grate-ful and I'm fright-ened and I don't know where I'm go - ing. I

Pno.

B

28

S1 *f*
feel it all, Can you hear me? I feel it all, Will you need me?

S2 *f*
feel it all, Can you hear me? I feel it all, Will you need me?

A *f*
feel it all, Can you hear me? I feel it all, Will you need me?

Pno. *f*

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E

67 *f*

S 1
feel it all, Can you hear me? I feel it all, Will you

S 2
feel it all, Can you hear me? I feel it all, Will you

A
feel it all, Can you hear me? I feel it all, Will you

Pno. *f*

73

S 1
need me? Can you tell me who I am? When can I take your hand?

S 2
need me? Can you tell me who I am? When can I take your hand?

A
need me? Can you tell me who I am? When can I take your hand?

Pno.

78 *mf* F

S 1
I be-lieve I'm in the right place at the right time We're con-

S 2
I be-lieve I'm in the right place at the right time We're con-

A
I be-lieve I'm in the right place at the right time We're con-

Pno. *mf*

No one asked me

6

83

S 1
nec - ted in ways no one can see Pow - er - less to

S 2
nec - ted in ways no one can see Pow - er - less to

A
nec - ted in ways no one can see, we're con - nec - ted Pow - er - less to

Pno.

88

S 1
change, build - ing re - sil - ience *mp* When will we find our

S 2
change, build - ing re - sil - ience *mp* When will we find our

A
change, build - ing re - sil - ience *mp* When will we find our

Pno.

93

S 1
way? I am strong, yet mo - ving with the wind, and when I'm lost

S 2
way? I am strong, yet mo - ving with the wind, and when I'm lost

A
way? oo

Pno.

G

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intentionally.

No one asked me

8

115

S1
take your hand? I feel it all. *ff*

S2
take your hand? I feel it all. *ff*

A
take your hand? I feel it all. *ff*

Pno.

122

S1
I feel it all. *mf*

S2
I feel it all. *mf*

A
I feel it all. *mf*

Pno.

129

S1
I feel it all. *mp*

S2
I feel it all. *mp*

A
I feel it all. *mp*

Pno.