

Sure on this Shining Night

Sure on this shining night
Of star-made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wand'ring far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

–James Agee

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From *Nocturnes*, The ACDA 2005 Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission

Premiere performance of the Nocturnes at the 2005 ACDA National Convention by the Donald Brinegar Singers and Morten Lauridsen, piano

I originally composed *Sure on this Shining Night* as the third movement for my choral cycle *Nocturnes* on poems by Rilke, Neruda and Agee. I set the verse very much like a song from the American musical theater stage and it should be sung in that manner.

In addition to the SATB/piano, TTBB/piano and SSAA/piano versions, *Sure on this Shining Night* is available as a mixed duet with piano and also as a solo song for baritone and piano combined with Dana Gioia's 'Prayer', published by Peermusic as *Two Songs on American Poems*, both recorded on 'Prayer – The Songs of Morten Lauridsen'. The men's chorus version is dedicated to my dear friend and choral icon, Maestro Paul Salamunovich, former conductor of the Los Angeles Master Chorale with whom I worked closely as a Composer-in-Residence from 1994–2001.

The complete *Nocturnes* are recorded on 'Sure On This Shining Night – Voce Sings Lauridsen', on 'Lauridsen – Mid-Winter Songs' by The Singers – Minnesota Choral Artists and on the Deutsche Grammophon 'Lux Aeterna – The Choral Music of Morten Lauridsen' by the Chamber Choir of Europe conducted by Nicol Matt. I accompany each of these recordings at the piano.

– Morten Lauridsen

The music of Morten Lauridsen, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, occupies a permanent place in the standard vocal repertoire of the twenty-first century. He was Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994-2001 and serves as Honorary Artistic President of INTERKULTUR/World Choir Games. His works, including eight vocal cycles, individual songs, choral and instrumental works and a series of sacred motets, are regularly performed throughout the world and have been recorded on over 200 CDs, several of which have received Grammy nominations. An award-winning documentary by filmmaker Michael Stillwater, *Shining Night: A Portrait of Composer Morten Lauridsen*, was released in 2012. Information about the film is at songwithoutborders.net.

Named an 'American Choral Master' by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2006, he was awarded the 2007 National Medal of Arts, the highest artistic award in the United States, by the President in a White House ceremony "for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power, and spiritual depth that have thrilled audiences worldwide." In 2016 Mr. Lauridsen received the ASCAP Foundation 'Life in Music' Award at Lincoln Center.

For more about Morten Lauridsen: www.peermusicClassical.com and www.mortenlauridsen.net