

Partners

Troupers

poem by Sarah Getty
music by Pamela J. Marshall

for SATB chorus & piano



Partners
Troupers
by Pamela J. Marshall
for SATB chorus & piano

dedicated to David Getty and The Master Singers of Lexington

Composer's Notes

Partners is a special group of choral pieces that set poems by Sarah Getty. Sarah was a celebrated poet from Bedford, Massachusetts and a member of The Master Singers of Lexington, MA USA. Her husband David is still a chorus member. During a previous project with the chorus, David gave me three wonderful volumes of Sarah's work and I set one of them as a spoken word text with music. Knowing my enthusiasm for Sarah's poetic sensitivity and in her memory, Master Singers music director Adam Grossman and David Getty commissioned me to create a new piece for the chorus with Sarah's poems. COVID intervened and my inspiration waned, but in 2022, the project began to come together and The Master Singers gave an inspired premiere in November 2022.

The three poems of *Partners* are about shared experiences, between colleagues (who are circus dogs), between husband and wife, and between mother and daughter. The three choral pieces are published separately. You could perform them by themselves, as a set, or spread throughout a program. The pieces are *Troupers* (6:30), *Cleaning the Storm Windows* (5:00), and *That Woman* (5:00).

About Troupers

"Troupers" is a celebration and a critique of the circus. The words fell naturally into a waltz rhythm, but when Sarah wrote about the crowd confused by the spectacle, a more direct speaking seemed appropriate, and the waltz disappears for a while. The waltz rhythm returns when we learn more about the narrator, one of a pair of dogs who roll a barrel around the ring. The words tumble forward, overlapping, as if the words themselves were rolling around in the barrel. Their repetitive task may seem unsatisfying, but we learn that the dogs are content with doing their job well.

--- Pamela J. Marshall
June 2023



+1 781-862-0884
info@spindrift.com
www.spindrift.com

Troupers

by Sarah Getty

Published in *The Land of Milk and Honey* (© 1996 Sarah Getty) page 27.

Used with the kind permission of David Getty for the estate of Sarah Getty.

[Short text to introduce the dogs]

(In the third ring, Canine Wonders.)

Two dogs in the third ring of the great circus consider a lifetime of teamwork.

The poem:

Two rings away, the gorillas are waltzing
in pairs. Soon the lady gorillas
will take off their heads and step

out of their hairy cocoons—they are really
glittering women who climb right up
to the top of those ropes

and dance there, pointing and spinning like weather-
cocks, while down on the sawdust the male
gorillas man, or ape, the ropes.

In the center ring, the lion tamer snaps
the big she-cats into orbit. They
ring his small, dense center, faster

than planets, wilder than electrons. Later,
he will seek glory in the black hole of the lioness's mouth.

In the meantime, the clowns clown around, fifteen
elephants lean in a pyramid,
and the watching faces, like

rows of scribbled o's, open and close around
noises and cotton candy. People
drift out to the bathrooms or

snackbars, come back with popcorn, get to know their
neighbors, smack their kids. Like tourists in
a cathedral or the Grand

Canyon, they're numbed by the splendor, too little
to take it all in. Even the spot-
lights, meant to help, confuse them.

Luckily, we are not in charge of all this.
We're only two-ninths of a small act
in the third ring, called Wanda's

Canine Wonders. Tonight, you are inside our
little keg, running hard, rolling it
clockwise around the ring.

I am on top, outside the keg, facing backward,
my feet busy as a lumberjack's,
letting it roll beneath me.

Tomorrow night, I will be inside, rolling
the keg, and you will be outside it,
running the other way. But

the keg will roll just as it always does, no
matter who's inside. And no matter
what we do, nobody much

will watch us, what with the rope-dancing ladies,
the lions, the elephants, and the
other dogs riding their bikes.

But that is not our concern. We have only
to roll our little keg clockwise
around the ring, inside and

outside, on alternating nights. Nobody else
does it better, and it's not exactly
easy. The one inside works

harder, but the one on top might fall off, so
it evens out. We make progress, though
once the circle is complete

we just have to go around again. It's not
what we had in mind when we first joined
the circus, but it's our own

specialty now, and like Wanda always says,
"In this business, if you get a good act
together, don't mess with it."

Troupers

Allegretto con spirito ♩. = 56
mf

SOPRANO
In the third ring_ Ca - nine_ Won-ders

ALTO
In the third ring_ Ca - nine_ Won-ders

TENOR
In the third ring_ Ca - nine_ Won-ders

BASS
In the third ring_ Ca - nine_ Won-ders

Piano
Allegretto con spirito ♩. = 56
mf *p*

8

S.
A.
T.
B.

Pno. *simile*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

15 *mf* Moderato, as a recitative

S. Two dogs in the third ring of the great cir - cus_ con-si-der a life-time of team -

A. Two dogs in the third ring of the great cir - cus_ con-si-der a life-time of team -

T. Two dogs in the third ring of the great cir - cus_ con-si-der a life-time of team -

B. Two dogs in the third ring of the great cir - cus_ con-si-der a life-time of team -

Pno. Moderato, as a recitative

21 **A** Tempo 1 ♩ = 56 *mf*

S. work. Two rings a - way, the go - ril-las are waltz-ing in pairs.

A. work. Two rings a - way, the go - ril-las are waltz-ing in pairs.

T. work. Two rings a - way, *mp*

B. work. Two rings a - way, *mp*

Pno. **A** Tempo 1 ♩ = 56 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

29

S. _____

A. _____

T. *p* _____ *mp* _____
8
Soon the la - dy go - ril - las will take off their heads and step

B. *p* _____ *mp* _____
8
Soon the la - dy go - ril - las will take off their heads and step

Pno. *mp* _____

37

S. *mp* _____ *mf* _____ *f* _____
out of their hair - y co coons they are real - ly glit - ter - ing wo - men

A. *mp* _____ *mf* _____ *f* _____
out of their hair - y co coons they are real - ly glit - ter - ing wo - men

T. *mp* _____ *mf* _____ *f* _____
8
out of their hair - y co coons they are real - ly glit - ter - ing wo - men

B. *mp* _____ *mf* _____ *f* _____
out of their hair - y co coons they are real - ly glit - ter - ing wo - men

Pno. *f* _____ *mf* _____

Troupers - SATB & Piano

44 *mf*

S. who climb right up to the top of those ropes and dance there,

A. who climb right up to the top ropes and dance there,

T. who climb right up to the top ropes and dance there,

B. who climb up top, top of those ropes and dance there,

Pno.

52 *mp*

S. point-ing and spin-ning like wea-ther-cocks,

A. point-ing and spin-ning while down on the saw-dust

T. the

B. the

Pno. *f mp p*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

59

S. _____

A. _____

T. *8* male_ go - ril - las man, or ape, those ropes.

B. male_ go - ril - las man, or ape, those ropes.

Pno. _____

66

S. _____

A. _____

T. *8* _____

B. _____

Pno. *mf* *p*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

73 **B** *mf*

S. In the cen - ter ring, the li - on ta-mer snaps the big she-cats in-to

A. *mf*
In the cen - ter ring, the li - on ta-mer snaps the big she-cats in-to

T. *mp*
the cen - ter ring,

B. *mp*
the cen - ter ring,

Pno. *f* *mf* *mp*

8^{va}-1

81

S. or - bit.

A. *mf*
or - bit. dense cen - ter,

T. *mp* *mf*
They ring his small dense cen - ter,

B. *mp* *mf*
They ring his small dense cen - ter,

Pno. *mp* *mf*

8^{va}

Troupers - SATB & Piano

86

S. *f*
fas - ter than plan - ets, wil - der than e - lec - trons.

A. *f*
fas - ter than plan - ets, wil - der than e - lec - trons.

T. *f* *mp*
fas - ter than plan - ets, wil - der La - ter,

B. *p*
and

Pno. *f* *mp*

90

S. - - - - -

A. - - - - -

T. *pp*
he will seek glo - ry in the black hole of the li - on-ness's mouth.

B. *pp*
la - ter, he will seek glo - ry in the black hole of the li - on-ness's mouth.

Pno. *pp*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

rit.

96

S.

A.

T.

B.

Pno.

p

mp

101

C

Meno mosso ♩=110

mp

S.

A.

T.

B.

Pno.

mp

In the mean-time, the clowns clown a-round,

fif-teen el-e-phants lean in-to a

Troupers - SATB & Piano

105 *pp* half whispered

S. like rows of scrib-bled o's,

A. *mf* and the watch ing— fa- ces, like rows of scrib-bled o's, o - pen and

T. 8 py - ra - mid, like rows of scrib-bled o's,

B. like rows of scrib-bled o's, o - pen and

Pno. *p*

108 *mp*

S. Peo-ple drift out to the bath-rooms or

A. close a-round noi - ses and cot-ton can-dy.

T. 8

B. close a-round noi - ses and cot-ton can-dy.

Pno. *p*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

111

S. snack-bars, come back with pop-corn, smack their

A. *mp* get to know their neigh - bors,

T. come back with pop-corn,

B. smack their

Pno.

114

S. *mf* **D** kids. Like tour-ists in a cath - e - dral or the Grand Can - yon, they're numbed by the

A. *mf* Like tour-ists in a cath - e - dral or the Grand Can - yon, they're numbed by the

T. *mf* Like tour-ists in a cath - e - dral or the Grand Can - yon, they're numbed by the

B. *mf* kids. Like tour-ists in a cath - e - dral or the Grand Can - yon, they're numbed by the

Pno. *mp* **D**

Troupers - SATB & Piano

120

S. splen dor, too lit tle to take it all in. *p*

A. splen dor, too lit tle to take it all in. *p*

T. splen dor, too lit tle to take it all E-ven the spot-lights, meant to

B. splen dor, too lit tle to take it all in. *p*

Pno.

125

In 1 $\text{♩} = 48$ *poco accel.* *pp*

S. — mm

A. —

T. help, con-fuse them. *pp* mm

B. — mm

Pno. *pp*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

131 **Meno mosso** ♩=110 **In 1** ♩ = 48 **poco accel.**

S.

A. *mp*
Luck-i- ly, we are not in charge of all this.

T.

B.

Pno. **Meno mosso** ♩=110 **In 1** ♩ = 48 **poco accel.**
p

137 **Tempo 1** ♩=56 *p* *mf* *f*

S.
We are on - ly two-ninths of a small act in the third ring, called Wan - da's

A.
We are on - ly two-ninths of a small act in the third ring, called Wan - da's

T.
We are on - ly two-ninths of a small act in the third ring, called Wan - da's

B.
We are on - ly two-ninths of a small act in the third ring, called Wan - da's

Pno. **Tempo 1** ♩=56 *mf*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

145

S. Ca - nine__ Won-ders.

A. Ca - nine__ Won-ders.

T. Ca - nine__ Won-ders.

B. Ca - nine__ Won-ders.

Pno. *mf*

151

S. *mp*
To -

A.

T.

B.

Pno.

Troupers - SATB & Piano

F
158

S. night, you are in-side our lit-tle keg, run-ning hard, rol-ling it clock-wise a-round the ring.

A. *mp* our lit-tle keg, a-round the ring.

T. *mp* run-ning hard, rol-ling I am on

B. *mp* rol-ling it clock-wise round the ring.

Pno. *p*

166

S. bu - sy as a lum-ber-jack's

A. bu - sy as a lum-ber-jack's

T. top, out - side the keg, fac-ing back-ward, my feet bu - sy as a lum-ber-jack's, let-ting it

B. out - side the keg, fac-ing back-ward, let it

Pno. *mf*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

174

S.

A. *mp*

To - mor-row night, I will be in-side, rol-ling the keg, and you will be

T. *mp*

roll_ be - neath me.

B. *mp*

roll be-neath me.

Pno. *mp*

182

S. *mf*

But, the keg will roll just as it

A. *mf*

out-side it, run-ning the o-ther way. But, the keg will roll just as it

T. *mf*

But, the keg will roll just as it

B.

Pno. *mf*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

190

G *Meno mosso* ♩=96 *mf*

S. al - ways does, And no mat-ter

A. al - ways does, And no mat-ter what we do, - much will

T. does, no mat - ter who's in - side. what we do, - no - bo-dy much

B. no mat - ter who's in - side. no - bo-dy much will

Pno.

195

S. what with the rope-dan-cing la-dies,

A. watch us, and the o-ther dogs rid - ing their bikes.

T. the li- ons,

B. watch us, the el - e-phants, mm

Pno.

Troupers - SATB & Piano

199 In 1 $\text{♩} = 48$ poco accel. **Meno mosso** $\text{♩} = 110$

S. *pp* *mm* *mp*

A. *mp*

T. *pp* *mm*

B. *pp* *mm*

Pno. *pp* *mp*

But that is not our concern.

205 In 1 $\text{♩} = 48$ poco accel. **Tempo 1** $\text{♩} = 56$

S. *p* *mf*

A. *p* *mf*

T. *p*

B. *p*

Pno. *p*

We have on - ly to roll our

We have on - ly to roll, roll our

We have on - ly to roll,

We have on - ly to roll,

Troupers - SATB & Piano

211

S. lit - tle keg clock-wise a - round the ring in - side and out-side, on

A. lit - tle keg clock-wise a - round the ring in - side on

T. *mf* roll_ our lit - tle keg 'round the ring on

B. *mf* roll_ our lit - tle keg clock-wise a - round the ring in - side and out-side, on

Pno.

218

S. al - ter - nat - ing nights. _____

A. al - ter - nat - ing nights. _____

T. al - ter - nat - ing nights. _____

B. al - ter - nat - ing nights. _____

Pno. *mp*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

H

Meno mosso ♩=110

S. *mf*
No bo-dy else does it bet-ter, and it's not ex-act-ly ea - sy. The one in-side works

A. *mf*
No bo-dy else does it bet-ter, and it's not ex-act-ly ea - sy.

T. *mf*
No bo-dy else does it bet-ter, and it's not ex-act-ly ea - sy.

B. *mf*
No bo-dy else does it bet-ter, and it's not ex-act-ly ea - sy.

H

Meno mosso ♩=110

Pno. *mf*
mp

Tempo 1 ♩=56

S. *f* *p*
har-der, so it e - vens out. We make pro -

A. *f* *p*
so it e - vens out. We make pro -

T. *f* *p*
so it e - vens out. We make pro -

B. *f* *p*
but the one on top might fall off, e - vens out. We make pro -

Tempo 1 ♩=56

Pno. *p*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

237 *Meno mosso* ♩=110
mf *p* *f*

S. gress, It's not

A. gress, though once the cir-cle is com-plete we just have to go a-round a - gain. It's

T. gress, though once the cir-cle is com-plete we just have to go a-round a - gain. It's

B. gress, It's not

Pno. *mf*

241 *mf* *mp*

S. It's not what we had in mind when we first joined the cir cus, but it's our own spec-ial-ty

A. not It's not what we had in mind when we first joined the cir cus, but it's our own spec-ial-ty

T. not It's not what we had in mind when we first joined the cir cus, but it's our own spec-ial-ty

B. It's not what we had in mind when we first joined the cir cus, but it's our own spec-ial-ty

Pno. *mf* *p* *mp*

Troupers - SATB & Piano

246

S. *f*
now, and like Wan - da al - ways says, "In this busi-ness, if you

A. *f*
now, and like Wan - da al - ways says, "In this busi-ness, if you

T. *f*
now, and like Wan - da al - ways says, if you

B. *f*
now, and like Wan - da al - ways says, if you

Pno.

249

S. *ff*
get a good act to - geth - er, don't mess with it."

A. *ff*
get a good act to - geth - er, don't mess with it."

T. *ff*
get a good act to - geth - er, don't mess with it."

B. *ff*
get a good act to - geth - er, don't mess with it."

Pno.



Spindrift

Music Company

www.spindrift.com
info@spindrift.com
+1-781-862-0884

Selected Music by Pamela J. Marshall

Orchestra

Triptoe Suite (2222-4221, 1pc, timp, strings) in 4 mvts
Through the Mist (2222-2220, harp, 3pc, timp, strings) in 3 mvts
A chill wind in autumn (solo voice, 2222-4221-3pc, strings)
Traditional Christmas (treble chorus or soloist, 2222-4221, harp, 3pc, timp, strings)
Three Appalachian Carols (2222-4231, harp, 2pc, timp, strings)

Keyboard

Suite for harpsichord or piano
For piano: Daydream, Stomp, Imagine That Time Stops
Wordless Prayer for piano or organ
Playbook (Pacem Student Composing Project) for piano

Chorus

Bee-Song for SATB or SSAA chorus & piano - **Project:Encore selection**
Birding in Winter for SATB chorus & piano - **Project:Encore selection**
Deepest Shade for SATB chorus
The Future of Life for SATB chorus, trombone, piano
Shepherds and Angels for SATB chorus, violin, harp, tambourine
Weaving the World for SATB chorus, oboe, piano
Walden at Evening for solo horn, SATB chorus, percussion

Strings

Arcanum for solo violin, Soliloquy for solo cello
Elusive Sleep for cello and piano
Pascal's Theorems for cello and doublebass
Truth Becoming for string quartet
Soliloquy for cello
Rising for viola or cello
Quinteto sobre las poemas de Carlos Pintado for violin, viola, cello, doublebass, piano

Woodwinds & Brass

Poetry-Inspired solos for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn
Enchanted for oboe and chamber orchestra or piano
Communing with Birds for flute
Examine Variations for flute & cello
More mixed ensemble pieces on www.spindrift.com

Resonances for alto saxophone, trumpet, 2 trombones, percussion
Through the Mist for flute, violin, harp or guitar
Waves and Fountains for oboe, horn, piano
Zoa for flute and harp

Colored Leaves for solo horn
Black Bear Dance for horn quartet or choir and drums
"wild horn whose voice the woodland fills" for 8 horns
Star in the East (traditional carol) for 8 horns or horn choir
Wanderer for brass quintet
Among Friends for 4 horns or horn choir
Out of the Depths for horn choir

Recordings

Through the Mist, Ravello Records. Chamber music for winds, strings, harp
Visit www.spindrift.com for complete list. Demos available for many titles