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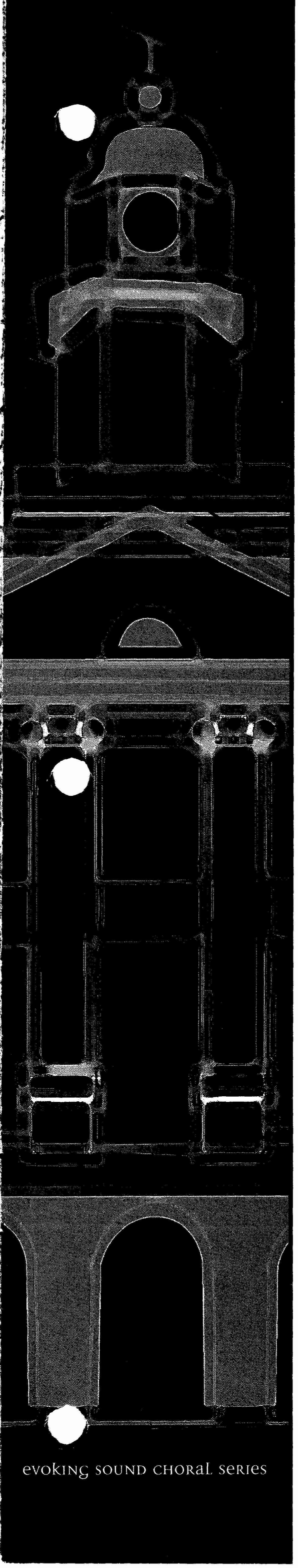

Music *from* Westminster

Joe Miller, Editor

Ballade to the Moon

from Three Nocturnes

words and music by

Daniel Elder

For TTBB Voices and Piano

A Westminster Choir College Series

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Notes

"Ballade to the Moon" is the first in a cycle of nocturnes for mixed chorus and piano, here arranged for men's chorus, exploring observational and psychological experiences associated with love, nature, darkness and light. The texts are original and approach these themes in different ways; this piece depicts a moonlit walk through woods and fields, while exploring the love felt for the narrator's surroundings. The beauty of the text is in its obscurity—the narrator could be referring to nature or to a romantic attraction. The night seems to call, "Come and dream in me!" Under deep forest cover, the narrator entreats the stars, "O share thy light!" until the twinkling stars gleam in the open meadow, luring, "Come and sing with me!" Love for the surrounding dusky beauty causes the narrator to weep with joy, with only the moon as witness.

Each stanza consists of four lines of iambic tetrameter followed by a separate, brief entreaty, then the final three lines (the last being a refrain). This recalls the form of the fourteenth-century ballades of French poet and composer Guillaume de Machaut, hence the title of this piece.

On moonlit night I wander free,
my mind to roam on thoughts of thee.
With midnight darkness beckoning
my heart toward mystic fantasy:

Come and dream in me!

How beautiful, this night in June!
And here, upon the velvet dune,
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

The path lies dark before my sight,
and yet, my feet with pure delight
trod onward through the blackened vale,
beneath the starry sky so bright.

O share thy light!

These woods, their weary wanderer soon
in awe and fearful wonder swoon;
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

And as the darkened hours flee,
my heart beats ever rapidly.
Though heavy hang my eyes with sleep,
my singing soul, it cries to thee:

Come and sing with me!

The twinkling sky casts forth its tune:
O must I leave thy charms so soon?
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

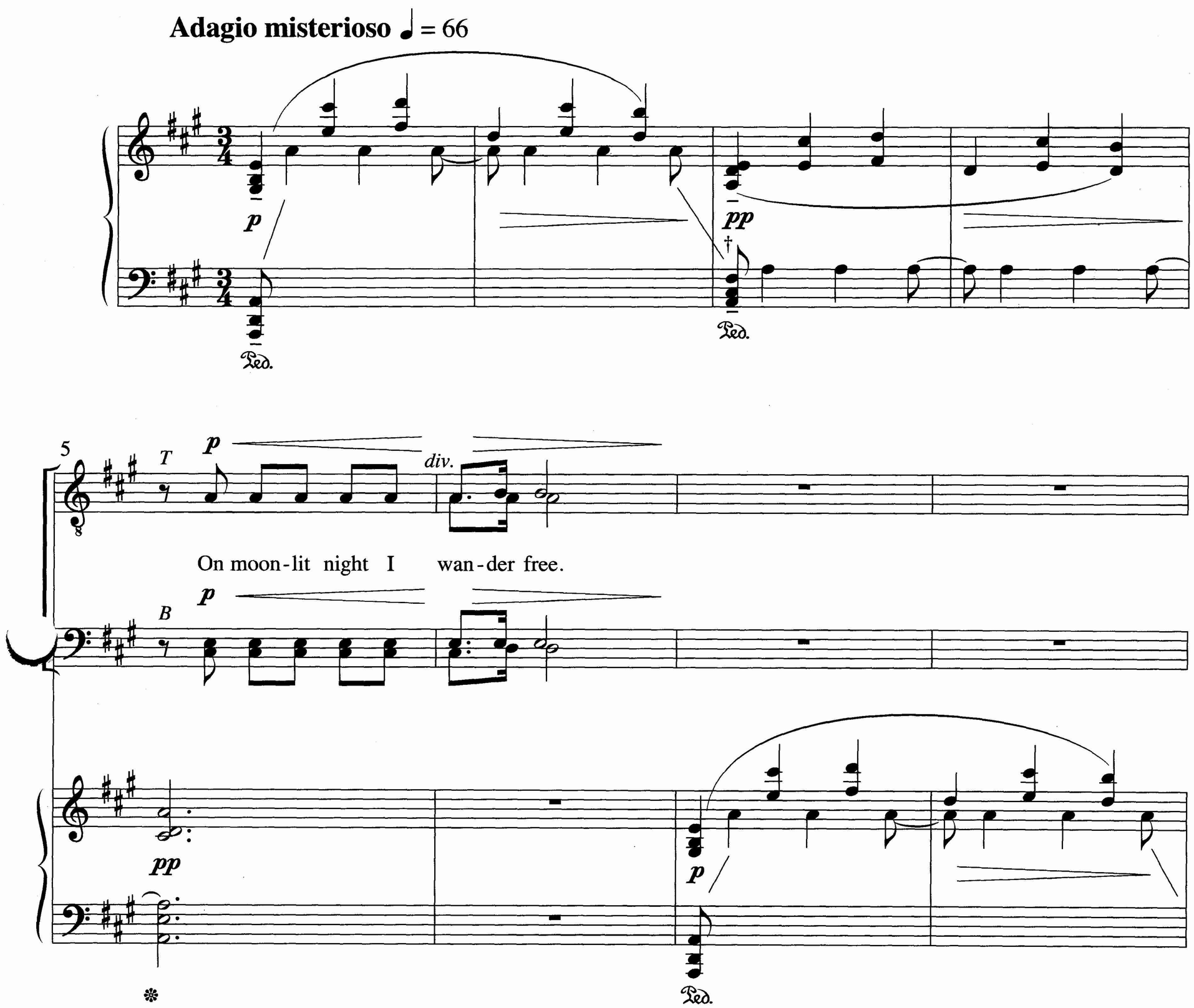
Most sections of this piece may be taken with a sense of rubato—though never overdone. However, during the piano interludes, a more romanticized interpretation is welcome. Slight tempo alterations usually imply changes of 10 to 15 beats per minute. In passages where the divisi is uneven, parts may be re-voiced.

—Daniel Elder

for the Baldwin Wallace University Men's Chorus
and director Frank Bianchi

BALLADE TO THE MOON

Daniel Elder
from *Three Nocturnes*



**An SATB edition is available, G-8071.*
†Bring out the C♯.

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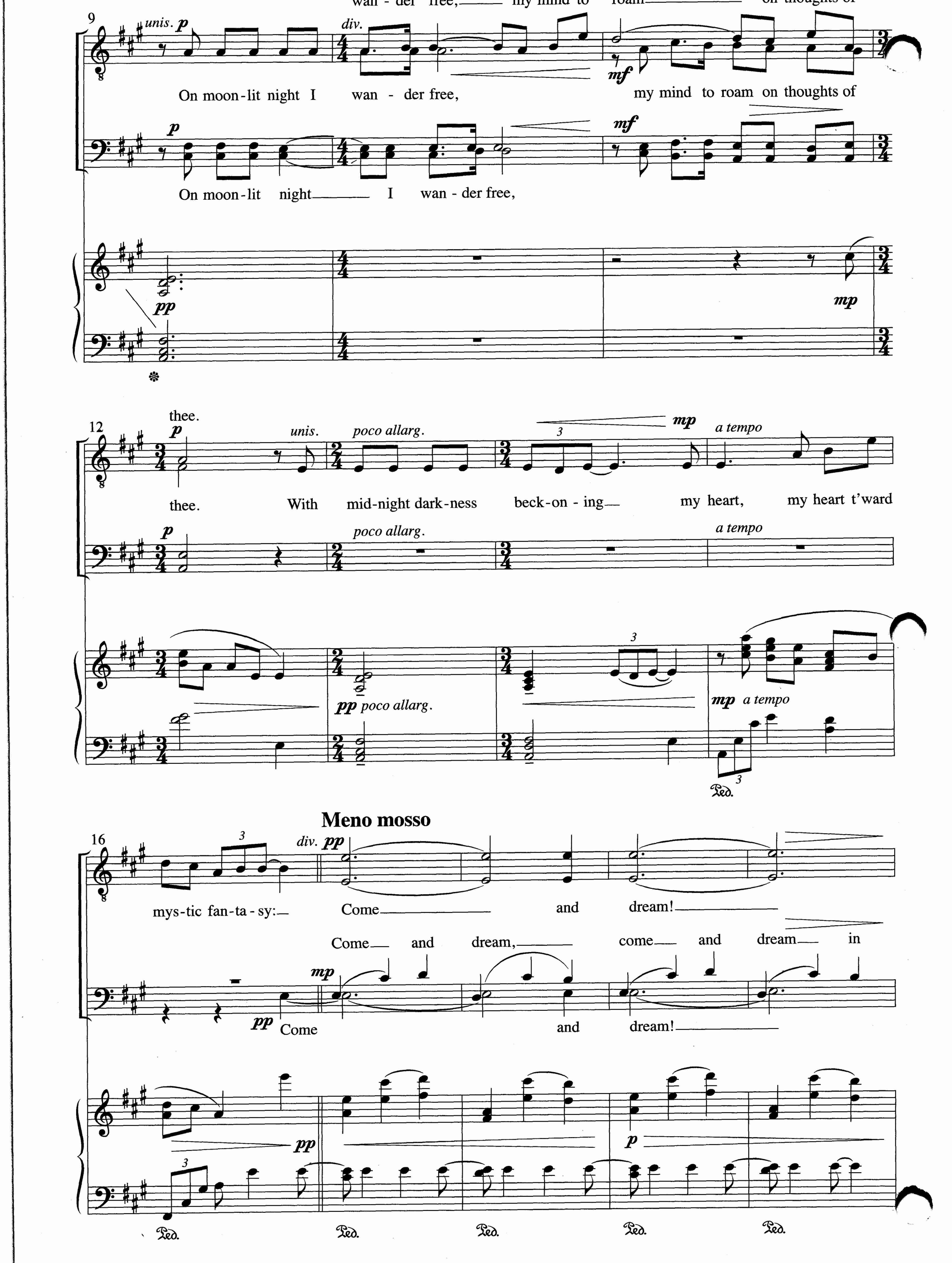

wan - der free, my mind to roam on thoughts of
9
unis. p
div.
mf
On moon-lit night I wan - der free, my mind to roam on thoughts of
p
mf
On moon-lit night I wan - der free,
pp
mp
thee.
12
p
unis.
poco allarg.
mp
a tempo
thee. With mid-night dark-ness beck-on - ing my heart, my heart t'ward
p
poco allarg.
a tempo
pp poco allarg.
mp a tempo
Ped.
Meno mosso
16
div. pp
mys-tic fan-ta-sy: Come and dream!
Come and dream, come and dream in
mp
pp Come and dream!
pp
p
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

Tempo I ♩ = 66

21

How beau - ti - ful, this night in June!

me! How beau - ti-ful, this night in June! And

How beau - ti-ful, this June! And

mf *pp* *ppp* *p* *mf*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

25

And here, up - on the vel - vet dune,

here, up - on the vel - vet dune, I weep with joy be - neath the

here, up - on the dune,

f *unis. mp* *poco rit.* *p*

Ped. Ped.

28

a tempo

moon.

a tempo *mp*

Ped. Ped.

p

and yet my

p

The path lies dark be - fore my sight,

mp

and yet my feet with

p

mp

Ped. Ped. Ped.

35

feet

mp

mp

unis.

feet trod on - ward through the black - ened vale,

pure de-light

p

cresc.

Ped. Ped. Ped.

38

p

be - neath the sky.

mp

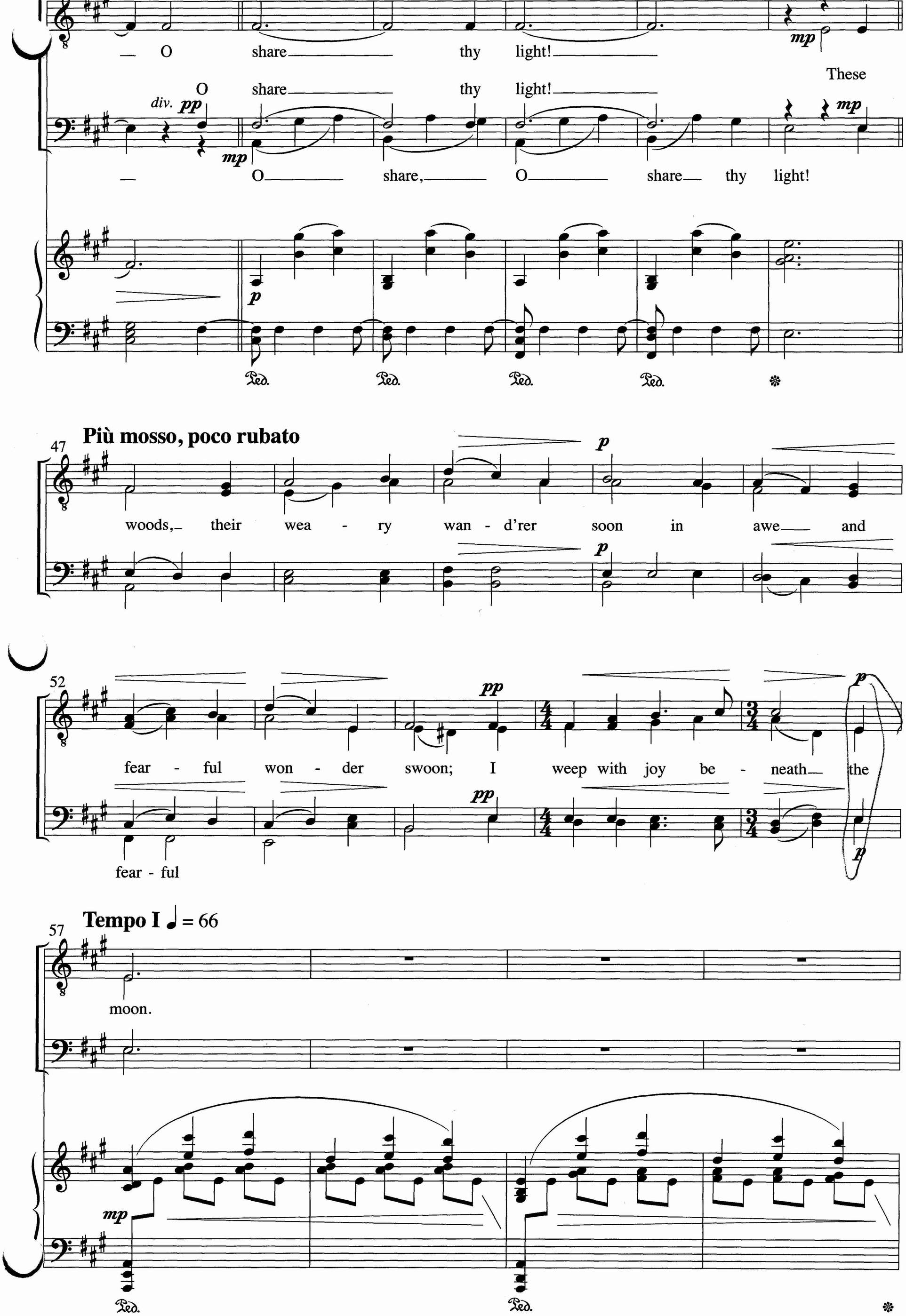
be - neath the star - ry sky so bright.

sfz

dim.

p

Ped.


O share thy light!
mp
O share thy light!
These
div. pp
mp
mp
O share, O share thy light!
p
Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.
Più mosso, poco rubato
47
p
woods, their wea - ry wan - d'rer soon in awe and
p
52
pp
p
fear - ful won - der swoon; I weep with joy be - neath the
pp
p
fear - ful
Tempo I ♩ = 66
57
moon.
mp
Ped. Ped.

And as the dark - ened hours flee, my heart beats ev - er

mp *mp*

my heart.

p

64

poco allarg. *p* *div.*

rap-id-ly. Though heav - y hang my eyes with sleep,

poco allarg. *p*

mf my

poco allarg. *p*

sfz

Ped.

my soul, my soul, my sing - ing soul,

67 *poco accel.* *mf* *cresc.* *ff* *a tempo*

mf my soul, my sing - ing soul,

my sing - ing soul,

poco accel. my soul,

mf *cresc.* *ff* *a tempo*

soul, my sing - ing soul, it

mp

poco accel.

a tempo

ff

3

sfz

Ped. Ped.

my sing-ing soul, it cries to thee: Oo.

my sing-ing soul,

cries to thee, it cries to thee: Oo.

Meno mosso

Come and

74 thee:

Come, sing with me! Hm.

Come (hm.)

Come, sing with me! Hm.

sing, come and sing with me!

78

The twin-kling sky casts

82

unis. ***pp***

O must I leave thy charms so soon?

p

I weep with joy be-

p *div.*

forth its tune:

86

unis. ***p***

neath the moon.

Tempo I ♩ = 66

unis. ***p***

p

pp *rall.*

Ped. Ped.

Music from Westminster

Joe Miller, Editor

The *Music from Westminster* Choral Series consists of choral literature commissioned or selected for performance by the choirs at Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, New Jersey, one of the foremost centers in the United States for the study and performance of choral music. The series was created to introduce—or revive—innovative compositions into the choral literature and represents a variety of voicings, genres and levels of difficulty.