

Benjamin Williams

Difficult Loves

*for*

Soprano Duet with Piano

# Difficult Loves

for  
2 Sopranos and Piano

Duration: 6 min.

I was invited by Soprani Compagni to participate in a project of new music for two sopranos on the theme “Portraits of Women”, which—as you might imagine—was somewhat daunting for me. What do I know about women? What could I say about women?

The poems selected for *Difficult Loves* were all written by Sara Teasdale, and perhaps give a portrait of a tragic female poet. But for me, it was just as important that these poems express the difficulty of relating to others, regardless of gender. These poems deal with the ways in which we sometimes misunderstand each other, stand distant from one another, or simply imagine others the way we fear they might be. Empathy then begins at the point where we recognize that the ‘other’ is probably just like us.

Commissioned by Soprani Compagni, Lisa Dawson, Tammie Huntington and Phoenix Park-Kim.

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Sara Teasdale  
(1884-1933)

# Difficult Loves

Benjamin Williams  
(b. 1982)

Allegro agitato ♩ = 66

## I. Faces

The musical score is written for two sopranos and piano. It begins with a tempo marking of *Allegro agitato* and a metronome marking of ♩ = 66. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The piano part starts with a *mp* dynamic and features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand. The vocal parts for Soprano 1 and Soprano 2 are initially silent, indicated by rests. The piano part continues with a *f* dynamic starting at measure 4. The vocal parts enter at measure 7 with the lyrics: "Peo - ple that I meet and pass In the cit - y's bro-ken roar,". The piano part continues with a *mf* dynamic. The score concludes with a final cadence in the piano part.

10 *f* *mp*

S 1 Fac - es that I lose so soon And have

S 2 roar, *f* *mp*  
Fac - es that I lose so soon And have

Pno. *f*

13 *f* *mf*

S 1 nev - er found be-fore, Do you know how much you

S 2 nev - er found be-fore, *f* *mf*  
Do you know how much you

Pno. *mp*

18 *mp* *f*

S 1 tell In the meet - ing of our eyes, How a -

S 2 tell *mp* *f*  
In the meet - ing of our eyes, How a -

Pno. *mf*

21 *mf* *mp*

S 1  
shamed I am, and sad To have

S 2  
shamed I am, and sad To have

Pno. *mf*

25

S 1  
pierced your poor disguise?

S 2  
pierced your poor disguise?

Pno. *mp*

28 *mp* *mf*

S 1  
Se - crets rush-ing with - out

S 2  
Se - crets rush-ing with - out sound Cry-ing

Pno.

31 *f* *mf*

S 1 sound Let me go, I can - not

S 2 from your hid-ing plac - es Let me go, I can - not

Pno. *f* *mf*

35 *f* *mp*

S 1 bear The sor - row of the pass - ing fac - es. Peo-ple

S 2 bear The sor - row of the pass - ing fac - es. Peo-ple

Pno. *f* *mp*

38 *f* *mf*

S 1 in the rest-less street, Can it be, oh can it

S 2 in the rest-less street, Can it be, oh can it

Pno. *mp*