

DT0024.2 | TRUMBORE | \$2.00
HOWEVER DIFFICULT (FROM HOW TO GO ON) | SSAATTBB CHORUS A
CAPPELLA

However Difficult (from HOW TO GO ON)

SSAATTBB Chorus a cappella
Text by Laura Foley

The logo for Dale Trumbore features a stylized musical note above the letter 'd' in the word 'daletrumbore'. Below the main text, the letters 'c o m p o s e r' are spaced out horizontally.
c o m p o s e r

HOW TO GO ON

PROGRAM NOTE

Following the death of a loved one, contemporary poet Barbara Crooker writes, "How can we go on / knowing the end of the story?" *How to Go On* answers this question in eight movements that range from questioning and doubt ("How") to introspection ("Relinquishment") to ultimate acceptance of our own mortality ("When at Last"). Threading solo voices in and out of the choral texture, *How to Go On* asks how we each confront our own mortality, and how, in the face of that knowledge, we can bring quiet grace back into our daily lives. Ultimately, this work finds beauty, catharsis, and solace in the words of three living poets: Crooker, Amy Fleury, and Laura Foley.

How to Go On was commissioned from composer Dale Trumbore by Choral Arts Initiative (Brandon Elliott, director); premiered on July 16, 2017 in Anaheim, CA; and released on an album of the same name in March 2017. This piece for SSAATTBB chorus and soloists is approximately 35 minutes long.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Soloists may differ from movement to movement.

When a word closes from a vowel to humming on "nn," "mm," or "ing," the transition from vowel to consonant should always be a slow close, not an abrupt one.

Whenever a glissando is marked between two notes, singers should use the entire marked duration of the slide to reach the next note.

The eight movements *How to Go On* may be performed in a different order from the one in this score, or they may be excerpted in performance. Three of many possible movement orders are below, listed along with the conductor or singer who originated that order. Regardless of the order, when all eight movements are performed, "When at Last" should remain the final movement.

1. How
2. However Difficult
3. To See It
4. Relinquishment
5. Requiescat
6. Knowing the End
7. Sometimes Peace Comes
8. When at Last

(Brandon Elliott)

1. How
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(Jenny Wong)

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(Ian Chan)

HOW TO GO ON

Texts are arranged in the movement order in which they were premiered.

1. How

How can we go on, knowing the end
of the story?

—Barbara Crooker, excerpt from “Some
Fine Day,” *The Pittsburgh Quarterly*,
2007.

2. However Difficult

However difficult you think it might be,
it is yours, this life,
even the failures
are yours,
even the garden, though it be unkempt,
is yours.

—Laura Foley, excerpt from “Autumn
Musings,” *Mapping the Fourth Dimension*,
2006.

3. To See It

We need to separate to see
the life we’ve made.
We need to leave our house
where someone waits for us, patiently,
warm beneath the sheets.
We need to don a sweater, a coat, mittens,
wrap a scarf around our neck,
stride down the road,
a cold winter morning,

(“To See It,” continued)

and turn our head back, to see it—perched
on the top of the hill, our life
lit from inside.

—Laura Foley, from *Syringa*, 2007.

4. Relinquishment

I am looking at pale blue ponds of melted
ice
on a frozen river
and in them perfect clouds passing.
Wind sends ripples along the water
and trees cut sharp lines into the sky. Soon
it will be gone, all of it
and I will be sitting in darkness,
sitting by a dark window, glad
for having seen this earth,
her elegant grace,
how she turns away from the sun.
And I will be learning, again,
how to give it all up by simply turning.
How to give it up to darkness, all you love.
All of it.
How to give it up again and again.

—Laura Foley, from *Syringa*, 2007.

5. Requiescat

Let us go, let go with the few roots
you have left clinging to this earth,
pull free, like the clean snap of a carrot
or radish, let us go, shake off this dirt,
let go, let go of your family, their story
hasn't been told, yours is already written,
let go of the world, its sweetness and sorrow,
let go of your friends, we will cry, yes,
but we will not forget you, let go,
let go your fierce will and stubbornness,
it served you well, now let it go,
your courage will remain, let your daughters
become women, your husband lie in his bed of
pain,
your long journey is over, theirs is beginning,
let us go, become spirit and light, spring rain,
fly away from this prison of bone, let go,
wait for us, we'll talk again later,
I am here by the phone, waiting for the call,
for this long suffering to be over,
let it go, your work is done,
soon we will bring you to the river,
bring your ashes to the current, let them flow
free,
earth, fire, cinders, rain, wait for us
on the other side of the river, let us go.

—Barbara Crooker, from *The White Poems*, 2001.

6. Knowing the end

How can we go on, knowing the end of
the story?

—Barbara Crooker

7. Sometimes Peace Comes

Sometimes peace is like this:
endless and gentle and soft
and no compulsion to go
anywhere. And even the fire
you walked through,
even the trail of ashes
is gone, not even a memory
in your heart, and even the sun is still,
unmoving and quiet,
and you have stepped into
a place beyond time,
beyond sadness and form.

A wide, high plain
where in the endless, deep silence
you find out what it is, what it is,
and your part in it.

—Laura Foley, from *Syringa*, 2007.

8. When at Last

When at last I join the democracy of dirt,
a tussock earthed over and grass healed,
I'll gladly conspire in my own diminishment.

Let a pink peony bloom from my chest
and may it be visited by a charm of bees,
who will then carry the talcum of pollen

and nectar of clover to the grove where they
hive.

Let the honey they make be broken
from its comb, and release from its golden
hold,

onto some animal tongue, my soul.

—Amy Fleury, from *Sympathetic Magic*, 2013.

However difficult

Text by Laura Foley

Music by Dale Trumbore

Slow; ♩ = ca. 50 rit. . . . A tempo poco rit.

p *poco* *p* *mf*

S. 1
How, _____ How _____ How, _____

S. 2
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

A.
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

Pno.
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

A tempo poco rit. In time, slightly faster; ♩ = ca. 56

p *mf* *sim.*

S. 1
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

S. 2
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

A. 1
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

A. 2
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

Pno.
How, _____ How, _____ How, _____

How to Go On
However Difficult

11

S. 1
How, _____ How, _____ Ah, _____

S. 2
How, _____ How, _____ Ah, _____

A. 1
How, _____ How, _____ Ah, _____ Ah, _____

A. 2
How, _____ How, _____ Ah, _____

T.
How-e-ver dif - fi-cult you think it might be, it is

B.
How-e-ver dif - fi-cult you think it might be, it is

Pno.

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Here's the next page:

How to Go On
However Difficult

poco rit. . . . *Slow* *f* *rit.*

19

S. Ah, Ah,

A. (Ah), yours.

T. *f* *mp* *f*
be un - kempt, is yours.

B. *f* *mp* *f*
be un - kempt, is yours.

Pno. *poco rit.* . . . *Slow* *rit.*

23 *Very slow* *mf*

S. Ah.

A. *p* *mf*
Ah.

T. *mf*
yours.

B. *mf*
yours.

Pno. 23 *Very slow*