

for St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral Girls Choir, Dublin

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

SA with Piano

Text by Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

Hymn-Tune by Ralph Vaughan-Williams

Arranged by Niall Kinsella

Gently flowing *Small Group*
p *molto legato*

Voices

O lit - tle town of

Piano

p *leggiero distant*

Red.

4

Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie! A - bove thy deep and

sim.

8

dream - less sleep The si - lent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets

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12

shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light; The hopes and fears of

16

all the years Are met in thee to - night.

p

Ped. ad lib.

20

Tutti
mp

O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly

mp

24

birth, And prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to men on

28

earth; For Christ is born of Ma - ry; And,

f

31

gath - ered all a - bove, While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels_ keep Their

mp

mp

35

watch of_ won - d'ring love. How

mp

39 Soprano

si - lent - ly, How si - lent - ly, The won - der-ful gift is giv'n! So

Alto

si - lent - ly, How si - lent - ly, The_ won - der-ful gift is giv'n! So

8va

43

God im-parts to hu - man_ hearts The bless - ings_ of his heav'n. No_

God im-parts to hu - man_ hearts The_ bless - ings of his heav'n. No

(8va)

47

ear may hear_ his_ com - ing; But in this world of sin, Where

ear may hear his_ com - ing; But in this world of sin, Where

f

51

meek souls will re - cieve_ him,_ still The dear Christ_ en - ters in.

meek souls will re - cieve_ him,_ still_ The dear_ Christ en - ters in.

8va

f

55

f

O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we

f

O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we

59

pray; Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to -

pray; Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to -

63

day. We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad ti - dings

day. We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad ti - dings

67

tell: O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel

tell: O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel

dim.

71

Small Group or Solo

p

pp

el. O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee

el.

pp

sim.

Ped.

76

lie!

ppp

8va

morendo a niente

PROGRAM NOTES

The much-loved Christmas carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, with text by American priest Phillips Brooks, exists with two melodies: the ST LOUIS melody, by Lewis Redner, which is traditional and most popular in the USA, and the FORREST GREEN melody, by Ralph Vaughan-Williams which is more common in the UK and Europe. This melody first appeared in the English Hymnal in 1906 and has been immortalized ever since. The opening and closing piano accompaniment of this arrangement are conceived to imitate the sound of distant sleigh-bells.

This arrangement was first composed and performed in 2009 as a solo by mezzo-soprano Mairéad Maguire and Niall Kinsella on piano, and was adapted in 2016 for two part upper voice choir while using the same piano accompaniment.

TEXT

*O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.*

*O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.
For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep the Angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.*

*How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given;
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His Heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.*

*O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray!
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels,
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!*

~Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

DURATION

Ca. 3 minutes

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Irish Pianist and Choral Conductor **Niall Kinsella** studied at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, Austria, and at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland. He has studied extensively and has performed as an accompanist throughout Europe. His debut CD, of the Complete Songs of Irish composer John F. Larchet was released internationally on Champs Hill Records (UK). As a choral accompanist, Niall has collaborated with Chamber Choir Ireland, RTÉ Cór na nÓg, The Webern Kammerchor der MDW, and choirs of the Wiener Chorschule (Vienna). He has also accompanied both concerts and conducting masterclasses of the famed Maestra Dr. Doreen Rao.

As a conductor, Niall has conducted many of Western Europe's major choral works. In 2014-15, Niall was selected as Association of Irish Choirs / RTÉ Conductor-in-Training, and was the assistant conductor to the RTÉ Philharmonic Choir and conducted Irish Youth Choir. More information at www.niallkinsella.com.