

# Melissa Dunphy

# Lola Ridge Songs



for SSAA choir

15 min  
2014-2018

Commissioned by Women's Ensemble and Bella Voce from Acalanes High School, Lafayette, CA (Bruce Lengacher, Director),  
Ancora from the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, Oakland, CA (Robert Geary, Director),  
and the Cornell University Chorus (Robert Isaacs, Conductor).



# Lola Ridge Songs

for SSAA choir

Music by Melissa Dunphy

## It's strange about stars...

2014

It's strange about stars ...  
You have to be still when they look at you.  
They push your song inside of you with their song.  
Their long silvery rays  
sink into you and do not hurt.  
It is good to feel them resting on you  
like great white birds...  
and their shining whiteness  
doesn't burn like the sun —  
it washes all over you  
and makes you feel cleaner'n water.

—From *Sun-Up [M. Betty]* by Lola Ridge (1920)

## Shadows over a cradle...

2015

(Shadows over a cradle...  
fire-light craning...  
A hand  
throws something in the fire  
and a smaller hand  
runs into the flame and out again,  
singed and empty...  
Shadows  
settling over a cradle...  
two hands  
and a fire.)

—From *Sun-Up* by Lola Ridge (1920)

*Commissioned for Ancora by the  
Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir,  
Robert Geary, Director.*



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## Different kinds of shadows

2015

There are different kinds of shadows.  
The blind ones  
are the shadows of things.  
These are the tame shadows—  
they love to play on the wall with you  
and follow you about like cats and dogs.  
Sometimes  
they hiss at you softly  
like snakes that do not bite,  
or swish like women's dresses,  
but if you poke a candle at them  
they pull in their heads and disappear.

But there is a shadow  
that is not the shadow of a thing...  
it is a thing itself.  
When you meet this shadow  
you must not look at it too long...  
it grows with your looking at it...  
till you are all alone  
with nothing around you...  
nothing... nothing... nothing...  
but a shadow  
with its eyes full of black light.

—From *Sun-Up [N. Betty]* by Lola Ridge (1920)

*Commissioned by Women's Ensemble and Bella Voce from Acalanes High School, Lafayette, CA (Bruce Lengacher, director), and Ancora from the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, Oakland, CA (Robert Geary, director) for Volti's Choral Institute for High School Singers, January 2016.*

## It isn't a dream...

2018

It isn't a dream....  
It comes again and again....  
You hear ivy crying on steeples  
the flames haven't caught yet  
and images screaming  
when they see red light on the lilies  
on the stained glass window of St. Joseph.  
The girl with the black eyes holds you tight,  
and you run... and run  
past the wild, wild towers...  
and trees in the gardens tugging at their feet  
and little frightened dolls  
shut up in the shops  
crying... and crying... because no one stops...  
you spin like a penny thrown out in the street  
Then the man clutches her by the hair....  
He always clutches her by the hair....  
His eyes stick out like spears.  
You see her pulled-back face  
and her black, black eyes  
lit up by the glare....  
Then everything goes out.  
Please God, don't let me dream any more  
of the girl with the black, black eyes.

—From *Sun-Up [I. Celia]* by Lola Ridge (1920)

*Commissioned by the Cornell University Chorus,  
Robert Isaacs, Conductor.*

# It's strange about stars...

Lyrics by Lola Ridge

Melissa Dunphy

*for all the survivors***Adagio** ♩ = 60

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto 1

Alto 2

Piano Reduction

**Adagio** ♩ = 60

S1

S2

A1

A2

5

have to be still when they look at you. They

You have to be still, still when they look at you. They

have to be still when they look at you. They

have to be still, still when they look at you. They

9

S1  
push, push, push your song in - side of you with their song.

S2  
push, push, push your song in - side of you with their song.

A1  
push, push, push your song in - side of you with their song.

A2  
push, push, push, push your song in-side of you with their song.

14

S1  
Their long, long sil - ver-y rays sink in-to you and do not hurt. It is

S2  
Their long, long, long sil - ver-y rays sink in-to you and do not hurt. It is

A1  
Their long, long, sil - ver-y rays sink in - to you and do not hurt. It is

A2  
Their sil - ver-y rays sink in - to you and do not hurt.

19

S1 good to feel them rest - ing on you like great white birds... *f*

S2 good to feel them rest - ing on you like great white birds... *f*

A1 good to feel them rest - ing on you like great white birds... *f*

A2 It is good to feel them rest - ing on you like great white birds... *f*

24

S1 great white birds... and their shin-ing white - ness does-n't burn like the sun— it wash - es *mp ff sempre ff*

S2 great white birds... and their shin-ing white - ness does-n't burn like the sun— it wash - es *mp ff sempre ff*

A1 great white birds... and their shin-ing white - ness does-n't burn like the sun— *mp ff*

A2 great white birds... and their shin-ing white - ness does-n't burn like the sun— *mp ff*

31

S1 ov - er you, it wash - es ov - er you, it wash-es ov - er you and makes you

S2 ov - er you, it wash - es ov - er you, it wash - es ov - er you and makes you

A1 *ff* it wash - - es ov - er you, it wash - es ov - er you and makes you

A2 *ff* it wash - - es ov - er you, it wash - es ov - er you and makes you

37

S1 feel clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er than wat - er.

S2 feel clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er than wat - er.

A1 feel clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er than wat - er.

A2 feel clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er 'an wat - er, clean - er than wat - er.

# Shadows over a cradle...

Lyrics by Lola Ridge

*Commissioned for Ancora by the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir,  
Robert Geary, Director.*

Melissa Dunphy

*J = 50*

Soprano 1: Sha-dows, sha-dows o - ver a cra - dle, sha-dows o - ver a,

Soprano 2: Sha-dows, tsss tsss

Alto 1: Hmm hmm o - ver a

Alto 2: Hmm (ossia in brackets) hmm hmm o - ver a,

Piano Reduction: (ossia in brackets)

*J = 50*

5

S1: sha-dows, tss sha-dows o - ver a, sha-dows, sha-dows o - ver a cra - dle, *poco a poco cresc.*

S2: Sha-dows, sha-dows, sha-dows o - ver a cra - dle, sha-dows, tsss

A1: cra - dle, a cra - dle, a cra - dle, sha-dows, sha-dows, tsss

A2: tsss a cra - dle, tsss, sha-dows, sha-dows

*fpp* *p* *fp* *p*

*poco a poco cresc.*

9

S1 sha-dows, fire - light, *mf* sha dows, sha-dows o-ver a, sha-dows,  
 S2 Fire - light cran - ing... *mf* Sha-dows, sha-dows, sha-dows,  
 A1 *mp* sha-dows, sha-dows, sha-dows o-ver a, *fp* *mf*  
 A2 o - ver a cra - dle, a

13

S1 sha-dows o - ver a cra - dle, *f* *legato* sha-dows, sha-dows o - ver a cra - dle,  
 S2 sha-dows o - ver a cra - dle, sha-dows, *f* *legato* sha-dows o - ver a cra - dle, sha-dows,  
 A1 *f* o - ver a, ha *f* ha sha - dows,  
 A2 cra - dle, ha *f* ha

17

S1 fire - light cran - ing... A hand throws

S2 fire - light cran - ing... Sha-dows, sha-dows o - ver a cra- dle...

A1 fire - light cran - ing... A hand throws

A2 fire - light cran - ing... A hand

**ff** **#8** **mp**

22

S1 some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire,

S2 some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the

A1 some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire,

A2 some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, the

**mp**

25

S1 some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, and a

S2 fire, some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, and a

A1 some-thing in the fire, some-thing in the fire, the fire, and a

A2 fire, some-thing in the fire, the fire, and a

28

S1 smal - ler hand runs in-to the flame, some-thing in the fire, runs in-to the

S2 smal - ler hand runs in-to the flame, some-thing in the fire, runs in-to the

A1 smal - ler hand runs in-to the flame and out a- gain, runs in-to the flame and

A2 smal - ler hand runs in-to the flame and out a- gain, runs in-to the flame and

32

S1      flame and out a - gain, in - to the flame and out a - gain

S2      flame, some-thing in the fire, and out a - gain, and out a - gain

A1      out a - gain, runs in - to the flame and out a - gain, and out a - gain,

A2      out a - gain, runs in - to the flame and out a - gain, and out a - gain,

42

S1  
S2  
A1  
A2

Shad- ows,  
and emp - ty.  
Sha- dows,

48

S1  
S2  
A1  
A2

sha-dows o - ver a cra-dle, sha-dows set - tling o - ver a cra dle...  
sha-dows o - ver a cra-dle, sha-dows, sha-dows, sha-dows set - tling o - ver a  
sha-dows o - ver a cra-dle, sha-dows, sha-dows set - tling o - ver a cra dle, sha-dows



# Different kinds of shadows

*Commissioned by Women's Ensemble and BellaVoce from Acalanes High School, Lafayette, CA (Bruce Lengacher, director)  
and Ancora from the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, Oakland, CA (Robert Geary, director)  
for Volti's Choral Institute for High School Singers, January 2016.*

Lyrics by Lola Ridge

Melissa Dunphy

**Moderato**  $\text{♩} = 60$ 

The musical score consists of five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts: Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, and Alto 2. The bottom staff is a piano reduction. The vocal parts sing the lyrics "There are different kinds, different kinds of shadows," while the piano reduction provides harmonic support. Measure numbers 1 through 6 are indicated above the staves. The dynamics are marked as *mp* (mezzo-forte) throughout.

**Moderato**  $\text{♩} = 60$ 

The musical score continues with five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts: S1, S2, A1, and A2. The bottom staff is a piano reduction. The vocal parts sing the lyrics "different kinds of shadows, shadows. There are different kinds, there are different kinds, different kinds of shadows. There are different kinds, different kinds of shadows. There are different kinds, different kinds of shadows. There are different kinds, different kinds of shadows." Measure number 7 is indicated above the staves. The dynamics are marked as *mp* throughout.

13

S1 diff' rent kinds of sha - dows, diff' rent kinds of sha - - - dows. The blind ones.

S2 diff' rent kinds of sha - dows, diff' rent kinds of sha - - - dows. The blind

A1 kinds of sha - dows, diff' rent kinds of sha - - - dows. The blind ones.

A2 sha - dows, diff' - rent kinds of sha - dows.

20

S1 — are the sha-dows of things. O these are the tame

S2 ones, are the sha-dows of things. O these are the tame

A1 — are the sha-dows of things. These are the tame

A2 Sha - dows, the sha - dows of things.

26

S1 sha - dows— they love to play on the wall with you and fol-low you a - *legato*

S2 sha - dows— they love to play on the wall with you and fol-low

A1 sha - dows— they love to play on the wall with you and fol-low *legato*

A2 they love to play on the wall with you and fol-low you a - *legato*

*lightly* *legato*

32

S1 bout like cats and dogs, cats and dogs. Some - times they hiss at you soft-ly *p* *3*

S2 you a - bout like cats and dogs. Some - times they hiss at you soft - ly like *p* *3*

A1 you a - bout like cats and dogs. Some - times they hiss at you soft-ly *p* *3*

A2 bout like cats and dogs. Some - times they hiss at you soft - ly like *p* *3*

*p* *3*

39

S1 like snakes that do not bite, or swish like wo-men's dres-ses,

S2 snakes that do not bite, or swish like wo-men's dres-ses, but

A1 like snakes that do not bite, swish, they hiss, or swish, they hiss,

A2 snakes that do not bite, or swish, hiss, or swish, or swish, they

*mf*      *p*      *mf*      *p*

*mf*      *p*

45

S1 but if you poke a can-dle at them, they pull in their heads.

S2 if you poke a can-dle at them, they pull in their heads.

A1 they hiss, or swish, they hiss, or swish, shh niente they pull in their heads.

A2 hiss, they hiss, they swish, they hiss, or shh niente they pull in their heads.

*f*      *p*      *niente*      *p*

*f*      *p*

*niente*      *p*

52

S1      *p*      *pp*

S2      *p*

A1      *p*

A2      *p*

S1      and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap - pear.

S2      — and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap-

A1      — and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap - pear.

A2      — and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap - pear.

S1      *p*      *pp*

S2      *p*

A1      *p*

A2      *p*

S1      and dis-ap - pear, and dis-ap - pear.

S2      —

A1      —

A2      —

59

S1      *pp*

S2      *pp*

A1      *pp*

A2      *pp*

S1      But there is a sha - dow — that is not the

S2      pear, dis-ap - pear. There is a

A1      But there is a sha - dow — that is not the

A2      But there is a sha - dow — that is not the

S1      *pp*

S2      *pp*

A1      *pp*

A2      *pp*

S1      —

S2      —

A1      —

A2      —

67

S1 sha-dow of a thing... it is a thing it - self. When you

S2 sha - dow... it is a thing it - self.

A1 sha-dow of a thing... it is a thing it - self. When you

A2 sha-dow of a thing... it is a thing it - self.

75

S1 meet this sha - dow you must not look at it too

S2 When you meet this sha - dow you must not

A1 meet this sha - dow you must not look at it too

A2 When you meet this sha - dow you must not

81

S1      *long...*      *it grows,*      *grows,*      *grows...*

S2      *look at it too long...*      *it grows,*      *grows...*

A1      *long...*      *it grows,*      *grows,*      *grows with your look-ing at it...*

A2      *look at it too long...*      *it grows,*      *it grows,*      *it grows with your look-ing at it...*

*mp*      *f*

*mp*      *f*

*mp*      *f*

*mp*      *f*

*mp*      *f*

87

S1      *till you are all a - lone.*      *There is a sha - dow that is*

S2      *till you are all a - lone.*      *There is a sha - dow, a sha - dow*

A1      *till you are all a - lone.*      *There is a sha - dow that is*

A2      *till you are all a - lone.*      *There is a sha - dow that is*

*p*      *> pp*

*p*      *> pp*

*p*      *> pp*

*p*      *> pp*

*p*

95

S1 not the sha-dow of a thing... it grows, grows,  
 S2 — that is not the sha-dow of a thing... grows, grows,  
 A1 not the sha-dow of a thing... it grows, grows,  
 A2 not the sha-dow of a thing... grows, grows,

101

S1 grows, grows...  
 S2 — grows, grows...  
 A1 grows till you are all a - lone with  
 A2 — grows till you are all a - lone with

poco rit.

S1 ff o o o  
 S2 ff o o o  
 A1 ff o o o p  
 A2 ff o o o p

poco rit.

107 **a tempo**

S1      *p*  
 no - thing, no - thing, no - thing a - round you... no- thing...

S2      *p*  
 no - thing, no - thing, no - thing a - round you... no - thing,

A1  
 no - thing, no - thing, no - thing a - round you... no - thing,

A2  
 no - thing, no - thing, no - thing a - round you... no - thing,

**a tempo**

112 *f broadly*

S1  
 no- thing... no- thing... no- thing... no- thing... no - thing... no- thing...no- thing...

S2  
 no - thing, no - thing a-round you... no - thing, no - thing,

A1  
 no thing, no - thing a - round you... no thing, no - thing,

A2  
 no thing, no - thing a - round you... no - thing... no -

*f broadly*

*f broadly*

117

S1      no - thing... no - thing... no - thing... no - thing... no - thing...

S2      — no - thing a - round you... no - thing... no - thing...

A1      no - thing a - round you... no - thing, no - thing,

A2      - thing... no - - thing... no - - thing...

121 **poco rit.** **Andante**  $\text{d}=56$

S1 **p**  
no - thing.... but a sha - dow, a sha - dow with its  
**p**

S2 no - thing.... but a sha - dow, a sha - dow with its  
**p**

A1 **p**  
no-thing a - round but a sha - dow, a sha - dow with its  
**p**

A2 no - thing.... but a sha - dow, a sha - dow with its  
**poco rit.** **Andante**  $\text{d}=56$

**p**

127

S<sub>1</sub>

S<sub>2</sub>

A<sub>1</sub>

A<sub>2</sub>

Piano

134

S1 black light, black light.

S2 black light, black light.

A1 black light, black light.

A2 black light, black light.

pp

pp

pp

pp

# It isn't a dream...

Lyrics by Lola Ridge

Commissioned by the Cornell University Chorus, Robert Isaacs, Conductor.

Melissa Dunphy

**Andante misterioso ♩ = 88**

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto 1

Alto 2

Piano Reduction

S1

S2

A1

A2

12

S1 It is-n't a dream...  
dream... It is-n't a dream... It is-n't a dream...  
dream... It is-n't a dream... It is-n't a dream... You hear  
It comes a-gain and a-gain... a-gain and a - gain...  
It comes a-gain and a - gain... a-gain and a - gain...

S2

A1

A2

**A**

17

S1 It is-n't a dream... on steep - les the flames have-n't caught yet and  
iv - y cry - ing on steep - les.

S2 It is-n't a dream... and

A1 It is-n't a dream... and

A2 It comes a - gain and a - gain... and

**A**

pp mp  
pp mp  
pp mp

**rit.** **Poco piu mosso**

21

S1      im-ag-es, im-ag-es scream - ing scream - ing when they see red light on the li-lies on the

S2      im-ag-es, im-ag-es scream - ing scream - ing when they see red light on the li-lies on the

A1      — im-ag-es scream - ing scream - ing when they see red light on the li-lies on the

A2      — im-ag-es scream - ing scream - ing when they see red light on the li-lies on the

**rit.** **Poco piu mosso**

**B**

**rit.** **Poco allegro**  $\text{♩}=112$

26

S1      stained glass win-dow of Saint Jo - - - seph. The girl with the black

S2      stained glass win-dow of Saint Jo - - - seph. The girl with the black

A1      stained glass win-dow of Saint Jo - - - seph. And you (ru)n,

A2      stained glass win-dow of Saint Jo - - - seph. And you (ru)n,

**rit.** **Poco allegro**  $\text{♩}=112$

**B**

30

S1 eyes holds you tight, the  
S2 eyes holds you tight, the  
A1 — and you run, and you run, and you run, the  
A2 — and you run, and you run, and you run, the

**p**

**mf**

**p**

**mf**

**p**

**mf**

**p**

33

S1 girl with the black eyes holds you tight, and you  
S2 girl with the black eyes holds you tight, and you  
A1 girl with the black black eyes, the girl with the black eyes holds you tight, and you  
A2 girl with the black black eyes, the girl with the black, black, eyes, and you

**fp**

**mf**

**p**

**fp**

**mf**

**p**

**p**

**fp**

**mf**

**p**

37 **C**

S1 (ru)n, and run past the wild, wild towers, and trees in the gar - dens tug-ging at their feet and

S2 (ru)n, and run past the wild, wild towers, and trees in the gar - dens tug-ging at their feet and

A1 (ru)n, and run past the wild, wild\_towers, and trees in the gar - dens tug-ging at their feet and

A2 (ru)n, and run past the wild, wild\_towers, and trees in the gar - dens tug-ging at their feet and

**C**

41 **f**

S1 lit-tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops a - cry - ing and cry ing be-cause no - one stops...

S2 lit-tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops a - cry - ing and cry ing be-cause no - one

A1 lit-tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops cry - ing and cry ing be-cause no - one stops...and you **mf**

A2 lit-tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops cry - ing and cry ing be-cause no - one

**f** **mf**

**D**

45

S1      *mf*  
 and you (ru)n, and run past the wild, wild towers, and trees in the

S2      *mf*  
 stops... and you (ru)n, and run past the wild, wild towers, and

A1  
 (ru)n, and run past the wild, wild towers, and trees in the gar - dens

A2      *mf*      *fp*      *mf*  
 stops... And you (ru)n, \_\_\_\_\_ and you run, and you

**D**

48

S1  
 gar - dens tug ging at their feet and lit - tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the

S2  
 trees in the gar - dens tug ging at their feet and lit - tle fright-en ed dolls shut

A1  
 tug ging at their feet and lit - tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops

A2      *fp*      *mf*      *fp*      *mf*  
 (ru)n, \_\_\_\_\_ and you (ru)n, \_\_\_\_\_ and you run, and you

54

*mf*

S1 run, and you run, and run past the

*mf*

S1 run, and you run, and run past the wild

S2 run and run past the wild, wild towers, and trees in the gar - dens

A1 wild, wild towers, and trees in the gar - dens tug-ging at their feet and

A2 run past the wild, wild towers and trees in the gar - dens tug-ging at their

*mf*

57

S1 wild towers. you spin,  
towers. you spin, you spin,

S2 tug ging at their feet and lit - tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops a -

A1 lit - tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops a - cry - ing...and cry-ing be-cause

A2 feet and lit - tle fright-en ed dolls shut up in the shops a - cry - ing and

60

S1 you spin, you spin, you

S2 you spin, you spin, you

A1 cry - ing...and cry-ing be-cause no - one stops... you spin,

A2 no - one stops... you spin, you spin, you spin

Bass cry - ing be-cause no - one stops... you spin, you spin, you

**F**

69

S1      clutch-es her by the hair...      He al - ways clutch-es her by the [inhale] hair...

S2      clutch-es her by the hair...      He al - ways clutch-es her by the [inhale] hair...

A1      her by the hair...      He al - ways clutch-es her by the [inhale] hair....

A2      her by the hair...      He al - ways clutch-es her by the [inhale] hair....

75

S1 His eyes stick out like spears. You see her pulled-back face and her black

S2 His eyes stick out like spears. You see her pulled-back face and her black,

A1 His eyes stick out like spears. You see her pulled-back face and her

A2 His eyes stick out like spears. You see her pulled-back face and her

Pf

83

**S1**

**p**

**rit.**

black eyes lit up by the glare...

**S2**

**p**

black eyes lit up by the glare...

**A1**

**p**

black eyes lit up by the glare... Then ev'-ry-thing goes

**A2**

**p**

black eyes lit up by the glare... Then ev'-ry-thing goes

**rit.**

**G Andante misterioso ♩ = 80**

90

S1 *pp sotto voce* Ooh Please God, don't let me dream\_

S2 *pp sotto voce* Ooh ooh ooh ooh

A1 *pp sotto voce* out. ooh ooh ooh

A2 *p espressivo* out. Don't let me dream\_

**G Andante misterioso ♩ = 80**

*pp sotto voce*

97

S1 — an - y more of the girl with the black, black eyes. *rit.* *pp*

S2 ooh. *ppp sotto voce*

A1 ooh. *ppp sotto voce*

A2 — an - y more of the girl with the black, ooh. *rit.*

*ppp sotto voce*