

# This Shining Night

*for organ*

Christopher Churcher

(2023)



Composed July 2023 for the Beauty in Sound Organ Composition Competition

## Registration

Swell | Flute 8' only

Great | Stopped Diapason 8' 16' (*Swell to Great*)

Choir | Flute 8' 2'

Pedals | Bourdon 8' 16'

## Performance Note

Composed for a 3-manual organ. Throughout the composition, the semiquavers are *poco staccato* until b.51, where they should be played legato. Registration changes are written in boxes, but the performer has some freedom in registration. Registrations should respond to the shift in dynamics throughout the piece.

## Composer's Note

“This Shining Night” takes its title from James Agee's poem “Sure on this shining night.” Inspired by Susan Pilcher's dramatic night photography, the music traces the journey of an eye adjusting to the night sky, gradually picking out little stars twinkling in the sky above. As the piece unfolds, the organ's dynamic power intensifies, conjuring the overwhelming majesty of the cosmos. The piece juxtaposes twinkling motifs, evoking wonder, with deep, resonant chords, suggesting a profound sense of awe in the face of the immensity of the universe. The composition invites listeners to immerse themselves in the image of the night sky, embracing the beauty and insignificance we feel beneath a shimmering sky of stars.

**Duration: ca. 3'30"**

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# This Shining Night

for Tom Bell

Christopher Churcher

b.2004

With great stillness  $\text{♩} = 48$

Manuals

sw. *pp*

Pedals

gt. *p* *mp*

*p*

11

ch. *p*

gt. *mp* *p*

ch. *p*

20

gt. *mp* *mf* *f*

ch. *mf* *f*

sw. *mf*

-16'

+4'

+4'

28 *ch.* "like stars" *p* *sempre poco stacc.* *sim.* *ch.*

31 *gt.*  $-4'$  *mp cresc.*  $+4'$   $\text{♩} : 8$

34 *mf cresc.*

37

40

43

gt. *f*

+16', mixtures

ch. *mp* +4'

ch. *mf*

47

rit.

gt.

*f*

With a sense of awe [tempo 1] ♩ = 48

51

*ff* *sempre, legato*

*sim.*

54

light reeds

sw.

*f*

57

gt.

2

2

60

7

7

7

rit.

63

*fff* a possible

This musical score is for guitar and piano, spanning measures 57 to 63. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The guitar part (gt.) is written on a single staff with a treble clef. The piano part is written on three staves: two for the right hand (treble and alto clefs) and one for the left hand (bass clef).  
Measure 57: The guitar plays a continuous eighth-note pattern. The piano right hand has a half-note chord, and the left hand has a half-note chord. Both are marked with a '2' and a slur, indicating a second.  
Measure 58: The guitar continues its pattern. The piano right hand has a half-note chord, and the left hand has a half-note chord.  
Measure 59: The guitar continues its pattern. The piano right hand has a half-note chord, and the left hand has a half-note chord.  
Measure 60: The guitar continues its pattern. The piano right hand has a half-note chord, and the left hand has a half-note chord.  
Measure 61: The guitar continues its pattern. The piano right hand has a half-note chord, and the left hand has a half-note chord.  
Measure 62: The guitar continues its pattern. The piano right hand has a half-note chord, and the left hand has a half-note chord.  
Measure 63: The guitar continues its pattern. The piano right hand has a half-note chord, and the left hand has a half-note chord. The tempo is marked 'rit.' (ritardando) and the dynamics are marked '*fff* a possible' (fortississimo as possible). The piece ends with a double bar line.