

17

Pno.

21 somewhat slower

Pno.

25 a bit slower and softer

Pno.

### Program Note

*Our World So Freely Given* is based on the nineteenth-century English hymn, “For the Beauty of the Earth.” Although the original melody is preserved, the harmonies and voice leading feel not quite right: twisted, troubled, perhaps feverish at times, but with sonorities that are not altogether displeasing. As the harmony becomes even more dissonant, the bassline of the hymn gradually detaches itself from the melody, transforming into the ancient *dies irae* chant which originally referenced the day the world “dissolves into ashes.” Yet, the melody remains steadfast. This paraphrase offers the opportunity to express gratitude for something that, despite being tarnished, is still beautiful in its own way as it struggles to survive against all odds.

### Performance Note

*Our World So Freely Given* is meant to be a contemplative and very personal prayer offered by the performer to the listener; the performance is therefore entirely about the expressive intent of the performer, not the composer. This piece should be introspective and deeply expressive, and the performer should feel free to use any phrasing, dynamics, or rubato that makes each performance intimate and unique to her. Fermatas may be taken liberally; performed *a piacere* or ignored altogether. Tempos are left up to the performer, although I prefer that it never be played quite as fast as the original hymn would be sung in church. The structural effect should be of an overall (gradual or terraced) decrease in tempo and dynamics, as the performer pleases.