

Eulogy

For Soprano, Violin, Viola, and Cello

Music by John M. Tarrh

Words by Martin Luther King, Jr.



Meriam Hill Music

**www.tarrh.com
(ASCAP)**

Instrumentation

Soprano
Violin
Viola
Cello

Performance Notes

Performance time: approximately 9.5 minutes

Program Notes

Eulogy (2018) was composed for the 50th anniversary of the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. On February 4, 1968, Dr. King preached his final sermon at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, two months before he was assassinated on April 4th. His sermon, titled “The Drum Major Instinct,” focused on the natural desire of people to be first, to lead the parade. At the end of this sermon, Dr. King gave his own eulogy, telling the congregation what he would want said at his funeral. A recording of the eulogy portion of his sermon was played at his private funeral on April 9th at Ebenezer Baptist Church. *Eulogy* is my musical setting for soprano and string trio of this portion of Dr. King’s sermon.

Dr. King’s public funeral was held later in the day on April 9th at Morehouse College, where he had gone to school. Eight pieces of music were played at this funeral, ranging from well known, favorite hymns (such as *We Shall Overcome*, *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*, *Balm in Gilead*, *Precious Lord*, *Take My Hand*, and the *Morehouse College Hymn*) to spirituals (*Ain’t Got Time to Die*) to classical music (Duprè’s *Cortège* and the *Largo* from Dvořák’s *New World Symphony*). The instrumental introduction for *Eulogy* contains excerpts from all of these works, with each instrument playing a different melody at the same time.

Towards the end of his eulogy, Dr. King quotes the words to a song written in 1945 by Alma Bazel Androzzo (*If I Can Help Somebody*) that was popularized by gospel singer Mahalia Jackson. My setting of this text is very different from the various versions of Alma Androzzo’s that can be found online.

I have adhered strictly to the text of Dr. King’s sermon. A recording of “The Drum Major Instinct” sermon as delivered by Dr. King is available in its entirety on YouTube.

John M. Tarrh

Composed for the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s death.

Vocal Score

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Eulogy

John M. Tarrh

Rev. 2/7/18

Andante (♩ = 80)

System 1 (Measures 1-7):

- Soprano:** Rests.
- Violin:** Rests, then *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* (mf).
- Viola:** Rests, then *Balm in Gilead* (mf).
- Violoncello:** *We Shall Overcome* (mf), ending with a triplet.

System 2 (Measures 8-13):

- Soprano:** Rests.
- Violin:** *Largo from New World Symphony*.
- Viola:** *Ain't Got Time to Die*.
- Violoncello:** *Morehouse College Hymn*.

System 3 (Measures 14-19):

- Soprano:** Rests.
- Violin:** *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*.
- Viola:** *Cortège*.
- Violoncello:** *We Shall Overcome (continued)*.

Adagio (♩ = 65)

20 *rit.* *mf*

S. Ev-ery now and then I guess we

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

26 *f*

S. all think re-al-is-ti-cally__ a-bout that day when we will be vic-tim-ized with what is life's fi-nal

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

30 *p*

S. com-mon de-nom-i-na-tor__ that some-thing that we call death. We all think a-bout it. And ev-ery now and then

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

35 *mf*

S. I think a-bout my own death and I think a-bout my own fu-ne-ral. And I don't think of it in a mor-bid

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

40

S. sense. And ev-ery now and then I ask my-self, "What is it— that I would want said?" And I

Vln. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vla. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *f* *mf*

45

S. leave the word to you this morn-ing.— If an-y of you are a-round when I have to meet my day,

Vln. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vla. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *f* *mf*

50

S. I don't want a long fu-ner-al.— And if you get some-bod-y to de-liv-er— the eu-lo-gy,—

Vln. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vla. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *f* *mf*

54

S. tell them not_ to talk too long. And eve-ry now and then I won-der what I want_ them to

Vln. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vla. *mp* *f* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *f* *mf*

58

S. *f* say. Tell them not to men-tion_ that I have a No-bel Peace Prize— *mp* that is -n't im - por-tant.____

Vln. *f* *mp*

Vla. *f* *mp*

Vc. *f* *mp*

63

S. *f* Tell them not to men-tion_ that I have three or four hun-dred_ oth-er a - wards— *mp* that's not im-por-tant.____ *p* Tell them

Vln. *f* *mp* *pp*

Vla. *f* *mp* *pp*

Vc. *f* *mp* *pp*

68 **Heroically**

S. *f* not to men-tion where I went to school. I'd like some-bod-y to men-tion that day that Mar-tin Lu-ther King, Jr.,____

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

73

S. tried_ to give his life____ serv-ing oth-ers.____ I'd like for some-bod-y to say that day that Mar tin Lu-ther King, Jr.,____

Vln. *p* *f*

Vla. *p* *f*

Vc. *p* *f*

77

S. *tried to love some-bod y. I want you to say that day that I tried to be right on the war ques-tion. I*

Vln. *p < f*

Vla. *p < f*

Vc. *p < f*

82

S. *want you to be a-ble to say that day that I did try to feed the hun-gry. And I want you to be a-ble to say that*

Vln. *p < f*

Vla. *p < f*

Vc. *p < f*

86

S. *day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were na-ked. I want you to say on that day that I did try in my*

Vln. *p < f*

Vla. *p < f*

Vc. *p < f*

91

S. *life to vis-it those who were in pri-son. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve hu-*

Vln. *mp p < f*

Vla. *mp p < f*

Vc. *mp p < f*

96

S. *p* man-i-ty. Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum ma-jor, *mp* say that I was a drum ma-jor for jus-tice.—

Vln. *p* *mp*

Vla. *p* *mp*

Vc. *p* *mp*

101

S. *mf* Say that I was a drum ma-jor for peace. *f* I was a drum ma-jor for righ-teous-ness.—

Vln. *mf* *f*

Vla. *mf* *f*

Vc. *mf* *f*

105

S. *mp* And all of the oth-er shal-low things will not mat-ter.— I won't have an-y mon-ey— to leave be-hind.

Vln. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

109

S. *mf* I won't have— the fine and lux-u-ri-ous things of life to leave be-hind. But I just want to

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

113

S. *f*
leave a com - mit - ted life be - hind. And that's all I want to say.

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

117

S. *mf*
If I can help some-bod-y as I pass a-long, if I can cheer some-bod-y with a word or song,

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

121

S. *mf*
if I can show some-bod-y he's trav-el-ing wrong, then my liv-ing will not be in vain. If I can do my du-ty

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

126

S. *f*
as a Chris-tian ought, if I can bring sal-va-tion to a world once wrought, if I can spread the mes-sage

Vln. *mf* *f*

Vla. *mf* *f*

Vc. *f*

130 Freely

S. *pp*
as the mas - ter taught, then my liv - ing_ will not be in vain. Yes, Je - sus,_ I want to

Vln. *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

136 *p*

S. *p*
be on your right or your left side,_ not for an - y self - ish rea - son._ I want to be on your right or your

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

142 *mf* Marcato

S. *mf*
left side, not in terms of some po - lit - i - cal king - dom_ or am - bi - tion._

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

147

S. *f* But I just want to be there__ in love *ff* and in jus-tice and in truth and in com-

Vln. *f* *ff*

Vla. *f* *ff*

Vc. *f* *ff*

151

S. mit-ment to oth-ers,___ so that we can make of this old world a new

Vln. *f* *ff*

Vla. *f* *ff*

Vc. *f* *ff*

156

Furiously

S. world, a new world.

Vln. *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*