

LAVENDER 薰衣草 for Soprano and Chamber Orchestra

This work was composed in 2004 and first performed on April 3, 2004 by Soprano Judith Kellock and Festival Chamber Orchestra with Steven Stucky conducting at the Barnes Hall, Ithaca, NY.

Lavender, a pale purple, is one of my favorite colors. The word Lavender is either a derivative of the Latin word *lavare*, meaning 'to wash' or the Latin word *lividula*, meaning bluish in color. It also represents a flower that was said to ward off the 'eye of evil' and was dedicated to the Goddess of Witches and Sorcerers, Hecate.

Li Bai (701-762) is better known in English as Li Po- the very same Li Po, four of those poems (in German translation) are set to music in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. Along with Du Fu, he is considered China's greatest premodern poet. His poems have been described as elegant, grand, eloquent, and flowing. According to the *Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry*, "hyperbole and outright fantasy" are prominent features in his work. Once favored by the emperor Xuan Zong, Li Bai was later slandered and had to flee to the south. Many of his poems were created while he was drunk; *Drinking alone under the moon* is one of them, in which the poet's profound sense of isolation leads him to seek companionship in the moon and his own shadow.

The piece is dedicated to its first performer, Judith Kellock, and to my composition teacher, Steven Stucky.

Instrumentation:

1 Flute (doubling Piccolo); 1 Oboe; 1 Clarinet in Bb (doubling Bass Clarinet); 1 Bassoon

1 Horn in F; 1 Trumpet in C; 1 Trombone (Tenor/Bass)

* 1 Percussion

1 Celesta (doubling Piano) Strings (2 Violins, 1 Viola, 1 Cello, 1 Double Bass)

Duration: ca. 7 minutes