

### ***In the Arms of Morpheus* (1986)**

In 1985, New Music Concerts commissioned Weinzwieg to write seven short a capella works for mixed chorus. This “choral album” ranges widely, from the popular and lighthearted *Hockey Night in Canada* (1985) to the intense portrayal of a political prisoner in *Prisoner of Conscience* (1985). *In the Arms of Morpheus* is evocative of the tranquility of nighttime, just before falling asleep. Though Weinzwieg wrote the text himself, he includes the following quotation from Lord Alfred Tennyson’s *Song of the Lotus-Eaters* in the inside cover: “Music that brings sweet sleep/down from the blissful skies.”

The texture of *In the Arms of Morpheus* is mostly sparse, as is evidenced in the work’s opening: first the sopranos and altos build a crunch chord step-by-step, sung first at *piano*, then at *pianissimo*; the tenors and basses then repeat the same gestures. Weinzwieg maintains this texture throughout, avoiding a full *tutti* until the closing *pianissimo* chord. The altos receive special attention in this work, as they begin each new line of text before being joined by the tenors. A textless soprano solo punctuates *In the Arms of Morpheus* and helps create the ethereal imagery of the work: that of succumbing to “weary eyes” and embracing the dream world created by Morpheus, the Greek god of dreams.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn