

**FORGOTTEN
VOICES**

Miles to Go
music by Katie Krings
text by Coco

ABOUT THIS PIECE

Every single movie is ending
faded to the black
Whether it's a
Coronary violence
(a massive heart attack)
Or it's a flyer from the fire of an automatic Mack
You get a go and then it's over
And you never coming back.

Every single life is ending
Pretty much the same
As just a struggle for the money
Or the love
Or for the fame
And it's a fight like every night
For all the hungry sick and lame
And then you die a year goes by
And no one even knows your name

Every single planet's just a
small exploding rock
On ours, the lives of all the greatest men
Like Roosevelt and Bach
Are interlocking with the beggars
And the traders of the stock
Still the universe surrounding them
Is winding down the clock

For every single friend of mine
I've ever had to lose is still a
ghost that I am carrying
inside my tennis shoes.
The nihilist is wandering past the woods,
so lovely dark and deep
'Cuz for them
I still have miles to go
Before I sleep.



I asked my friend Coco, who I knew to be a brilliant writer, to write a lyric for this project, and within about an hour, they'd sent me this expertly-crafted text. From the exquisite rhyming, driving scansion, and poetic references, you can clearly see their brilliance, anger, resignation, and resilience. For Coco, and many of my other homeless friends, their lives are marked with the relentless grief of losing people they love to overdose, exposure, violence, and despair, and this text beautifully captures the experience of slogging forward with those ghosts. Our homeless community walks upwards of 10 miles a day, from meal to meal, camp to shelter, and from one place they're not welcome to another. When the lockdowns happened at the beginning of the pandemic and all the shelters and libraries and fast food dining rooms closed, our homeless community literally had no other legal place to be except trudging endlessly along the sidewalk, as their feet bled and their shoes disintegrated. Thus, I chose to set the text using a blues workson because the experience of homelessness is a relentless, involuntary, dehumanizing, and often fatal form of oppression that is well represented by a musical tradition that was developed by enslaved Black people, and was continued into the 20th century by hard-labor prison chaingangs. The driving foot stomps are characteristic of this genre, and are also reminiscent of the endless walking of our homeless community. – Katie Kring



Katie Kring is a composer, writer-of-musicals, baker and alto. Katie's choral works and commissions are performed internationally and she has served as Springfield Chamber Chorus's Composer-in-Residence for several years. Her "At the Hour of Closing" was the winner of the 2019 MCDA Opus Award. She is particularly interested in creating work that empowers disadvantaged communities and is a passionate advocate for writing good parts for altos. Katie's musical theatre works include PEARL, ONWARD, FARMERS MARKET THE MUSICAL (about the time she got kicked out of the farmers' market -- twice!), IN THE SWIM and THINK BIG for the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and KELLY THE DESTROYER VS THE SPRINGFIELD COBRAS. Her first opera, SWEET LOUISA, is slated to premiere in 2022. Katie is the owner of Pickwick & Cherry, a bakery & cooking school, and an adjunct professor in the Missouri State University Music Department. In 2019, she founded the Springfield Street Choir, a choir made up of people experiencing homelessness and extreme poverty. She received her MFA in Musical Theatre Writing at NYU and her BFA in music at the University of Michigan, where she danced 25' up a tree and lived to tell about it. www.katiekring.com



Coco is a survivor of mental illness, domestic violence, addiction, and over a decade of collective homeless experience. They have ridden the rails, slept in vans, tents, and trap houses, overcame addiction, been locked up for petty poverty crimes, and parented some terrific children. Throughout, they have remained a loving parent, a brilliant writer and communicator, and a fierce advocate for justice for those experiencing poverty and marginalization.

Forgotten Voices Miles to Go

Music by Katie Krings
Lyrics by Coco

Blues stomp ♩ = 72

Soprano *p*
(a mas-siveheart at-tack)

Alto
Ev - ry sin - gle mov - ie's end - ing fad - ed to the black whe - ther it's co - ro - na - ry vi - o - lence (a mas-siveheart at-tack) or a

Blues stomp ♩ = 72

Piano (rehearsal only)

5

S
go

A
fly - er from the fi - re of an au - to - ma - tic Mack you get a go and then it's o - ver and you nev - er com - ing back.

T
go

B
go oh —

Body Perc.
foot stomps

Pno.

10

A

T

B

Body Perc.

Pno.

Ev-'ry sin-gle life is end-ing pret-ty much the same as just a
 Ev-'ry sin-gle life is end-ing pret-ty much the same as just a
 hey - up oh hey - up hey - up oh hey - up oh hey - up oh hey - up

16

A

T

B

Body Perc.

Pno.

strug-gle for the mo-ney, or the love, or for the fame and it's a fight like ev'-ry night for all the hun-gry sick and lame and then you
 strug-gle for the mo-ney, or the love, or for the fame and it's a fight like ev'-ry night for all the hun-gry sick and lame and then you
 hey - up oh hey - up oh hey - yo ho - hey - yo oh -

20

S

A

T

B

Body Perc.

Pno.

Ev-'ry sin-gle plan-et's just a small ex-plo-ding rock, on ours, the

die, a year goes by and no one ev-en knows your name. ay

die, a year goes by and no one ev-en knows your name. on ours, the

ho hey - up oh hey - up

Clap Stomp

24

S

A

T

B

Body Perc.

Pno.

lives of all the great-est men like Roo-se-velt and Bach are in-ter-lock-ing with the beg-gars and the tra-ders of the stock still the

ay in-ter-lock-ing with the beg-gars and the tra-ders of the stock

lives of all the great-est men like Roo-se-velt and Bach are in-ter-lock-ing with the beg-gars and the tra-ders of the stock

hey - up oh hey - up ho hey - yo ho - hey - yo

Miles to Go

Marcato, ♩ = 64

bellissimo *molto rit.*

28

S
u - ni - verse sur - round - ing them is wind - ing down the clock for ev - 'ry sin - gle friend of mine I've ev - er had to lose is still a

A
u - ni - verse sur - round - ing them is wind - ing down the clock for ev - 'ry sin - gle friend of mine I've ev - er had to lose is still a

T
u - ni - verse sur - round - ing them is wind - ing down the clock for ev - 'ry sin - gle friend of mine I've ev - er had to lose is still a

B
u - ni - verse sur - round - ing them is wind - ing down the clock for ev - 'ry sin - gle friend of mine I've ev - er had to lose is still a

Body Perc.

bellissimo *molto rit.* **Marcato**, ♩ = 64

Pno.

bellissimo *molto rit.* **Marcato**, ♩ = 64

32

molto rit. e rubato
bellissimo

S
ghost that I am car - ry - ing in - side my ten - nis shoes. the ni - hi - list is wand - 'ring past the woods, so love - ly dark and deep cuz fo them

A
ghost that I am car - ry - ing in - side my ten - nis shoes. the ni - hi - list is wand - 'ring past the woods, so love - ly dark and deep cuz fo them

T
ghost that I am car - ry - ing in - side my ten - nis shoes. the ni - hi - list is wand - 'ring past the woods, so love - ly dark and deep cuz fo them

B
ghost that I am car - ry - ing in - side my ten - nis shoes. the ni - hi - list is wand - 'ring past the woods, so love - ly dark and deep cuz fo them

Body Perc.

molto rit. e rubato
bellissimo

Pno.

molto rit. e rubato
bellissimo

Miles to Go

a tempo

37

S

A

T

B

Body Perc.

Pno.

solo

tr

a tempo

mm

I still have miles to go before I sleep

hey - up oh hey - up oh hey - yo