



CHICAGO SONGS
for soprano voice and piano

Kurt Erickson

2016

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Chicago Songs

Chicago Songs is my attempt to musically recreate something of the spirit and people found in Carl Sandburg's iconic poetry. Sandburg's world is one filled with the grit of burgeoning industrialization, the earnest hope of immigrant settlers, and the heartache and beauty found in the everyday. His characters are larger than life, yet tragically human - there's a poignancy in their foibles that I find very attractive. As a composer I've always been drawn to nostalgic, highly personal subject matter and these texts compliment my own nostalgic, highly personal musical impulses.

I SANG to you and the moon
But only the moon remembers.
I sang
O reckless free-hearted
free-throated rhythms,
Even the moon remembers them
And is kind to me.

EVERYBODY loved Chick Lorimer in our town.
Far off
Everybody loved her.
So we all love a wild girl keeping a hold
On a dream she wants.
Nobody knows now where Chick Lorimer went.
Nobody knows why she packed her trunk. . a few
old things
And is gone,
Gone with her little chin
Thrust ahead of her
And her soft hair blowing careless
From under a wide hat,
Dancer, singer, a laughing passionate lover.

Were there ten men or a hundred hunting Chick?
Were there five men or fifty with aching hearts?
Everybody loved Chick Lorimer.
Nobody knows where she's gone.

THERE'S Chamfort. He's a sample.
Locked himself in his library with a gun,
Shot off his nose and shot out his right eye.
And this Chamfort knew how to write
And thousands read his books on how to live,
But he himself didn't know
How to die by force of his own hand--see?

They found him a red pool on the carpet
Cool as an April forenoon,
Talking and talking gay maxims and grim epigrams.
Well, he wore bandages over his nose and right eye,
Drank coffee and chatted many years
With men and women who loved him
Because he laughed and daily dared Death:
"Come and take me."

JACK was a swarthy, swaggering son-of-a-gun.
He worked thirty years on the railroad, ten hours a day,
and his hands were tougher than sole leather.
He married a tough woman and they had eight
children
and the woman died and the children grew up and
went away and wrote the old man every two years.
He died in the poorhouse sitting on a bench in the sun
telling reminiscences to other old men whose
women
were dead and children scattered.
There was joy on his face when he died as there was
joy
on his face when he lived--he was a swarthy,
swaggering
son-of-a-gun.

I SANG to you and the moon
But only the moon remembers.
I sang
O reckless free-hearted
free-throated rhythms,
Even the moon remembers them
And is kind to me.

-Carl Sandburg

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I Sang to You and the Moon

Carl Sandburg

Kurt Erickson

Delicate & Mysterious ♩ = 70

Soprano

Piano

pp

With pedal throughout, blur the harmonies

8^{vb}-----

S

Pno.

mp

Languid and a little lazy with the rhythms

S

mp

I sang _____ to you

Pno.

mf

(don't change the pedal here)

I Sang to You and the Moon

7
S
and the moon

Pno.

7

8^{va}

9
S
But on - ly the moon re - mem - bers I

Pno.

9

8^{va}

11
S
sang O reck - less free - heart - ed free -

Pno.

11

8^{va}

mf

FOR PAPER USE ONLY

I Sang to You and the Moon

13
S
throat - ed rhy - - - thms, _____

13
Pno.
8vb - - -

15
S

15
Pno.
pp *p* *mf*

18
S
mf
E-veh the moon re-mem-bers them _____ 3 e-ven the

18
Pno.
mp 8va - - 8va - -

I Sang to You and the Moon

21 S moon re - mem - bers them and is kind to me.

21 Pno. *mf* *mp*

24 S I sang to the moon I

24 Pno. *mp*

27 S sang to the moon I sang to the moon

27 Pno. *p*

I Sang to You and the Moon

30
S
moon
8^{va} - - , 15^{ma} - - ,
mp mf

33
S
p
(Ahh)
8^{va} - - - - -
Pno.
8^{va} - - - - -
mf

35
S
mf
(Ahh)
Pno.
p mf
6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

Detailed description: This musical score is for the piece 'I Sang to You and the Moon'. It is arranged for Soprano (S) and Piano (Pno.). The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 30-32) features the Soprano part with the lyric 'moon' and a long note. The Piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the bass and a more active melody in the treble. Performance markings include *mp* and *mf*. The second system (measures 33-34) shows the Soprano part with a rest followed by a note marked *p* and the vocalization '(Ahh)'. The Piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, including a section marked *8^{va}*. The third system (measures 35-36) features the Soprano part with a note marked *mf* and the vocalization '(Ahh)'. The Piano accompaniment includes sixteenth-note patterns in the treble and eighth-note patterns in the bass, with performance markings *p* and *mf*. A large watermark 'NOT FOR PUBLICATION' is visible diagonally across the page.

I Sang to You and the Moon

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with a vocal line (S) and piano accompaniment (Pno.).

- System 1 (Measures 37-38):** The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. Performance instructions include *8va* (octave up) and *8vb* (octave down).
- System 2 (Measures 39-40):** The vocal line has a half note G4, a quarter rest, and a half note A4. The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. Performance instructions include *8vb* and *8va*.
- System 3 (Measures 41-42):** The vocal line has a half note G4, a quarter rest, and a half note A4. The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. Performance instructions include *15ma* (15th harmonic).

Large watermark: FOR PERUSIA USE ONLY

I Sang to You and the Moon

43

S

Pno.

sfz *sfz-*

45

S

Pno.

sfz *sfz-*

L.V.

47

S

Pno.

pp *p*

(Ahh)

with soft pedal

I Sang to You and the Moon

49

S

Pno.

8vb - -1

51

S

Pno.

Closed mouth

(Hmm)

53

S

Pno.

Sing as long as possible while piano part dies off

The image displays a musical score for the song "I Sang to You and the Moon". It is divided into three systems, each with a vocal line (S) and a piano accompaniment (Pno.).

- System 1 (Measures 49-50):** The vocal line features a melodic phrase with a slur. The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand part with eighth-note chords and a left-hand part with a bass line and chords. A dynamic marking of *8vb - -1* is present.
- System 2 (Measures 51-52):** The vocal line has a rest for the first measure, followed by a note. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns. Performance instructions include *Closed mouth* and *(Hmm)*.
- System 3 (Measures 53-54):** The vocal line has a long note with a fermata. The piano accompaniment continues. The instruction *Sing as long as possible while piano part dies off* is written above the vocal line.

A large watermark "OFFPERUSIA USE ONLY" is oriented diagonally across the page.

I Sang to You and the Moon

55

S

Repeat as many times as necessary, gradually slowing down until the tempo is barely moving.

55

Pno.

57

S

57

Pno.

ppp

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'I Sang to You and the Moon'. It features two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 55, includes a vocal line (S) and a piano accompaniment (Pno.). The vocal line consists of two measures with a whole rest. The piano accompaniment has two staves: the upper staff contains a melodic line with sixteenth-note patterns, and the lower staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth-note chords. A dynamic marking of 'ppp' is present in the piano part. The second system, starting at measure 57, also includes a vocal line (S) and a piano accompaniment (Pno.). The vocal line has two measures with a whole rest. The piano accompaniment has two staves, both of which are empty. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY' is overlaid across the entire page.

Gone

Carl Sandburg

Kurt Erickson

Atmospheric, yet sassy

Moderato (♩ = c. 110)

Soprano

Piano

Caress the keys

mp

rit.

a tempo

mp

With pedal

S

Pno.

mf <>

6

Ev - - - ery - bo - dy loved Chick Lor - i - mer in our town.

(8va)----- 15ma-----

S

Pno.

mf

12

Far _____ off _____ E-very bo -

8va----- 15ma-----

mf

8vb-----

S 17
- dy loved her. So we all love a wild girl keep - ing(a) hold

Pno. 17

mf 8va 8vb

S 22
On a dream she wants.

Pno. 22

rit. a tempo mp L.V. 8vb

S 27

Pno. 27

p mp mf 8vb

Gone

34

S

Pno.

rit. *a tempo* *rit.*

p

40

S

Pno.

mp *a tempo* *8va*

No - bo - dy

44

S

Pno.

Rall. *a tempo*

knows now where Chick Lor-i-mer went.

3 *8va*

48 *mf*

S

No-bo-dy knows where — Chick Lor-i - mer went

Pno.

mf

8vb - ' 8va - - - - ,

51

S

No - bo - dy knows

Pno.

f

8vb - - - - - , 8va - - - - - ,

52

S

why she packed her trunk...

Pno.

8vb - - - - - , 8va - - - - - ,

Gone

53 *f*

S a few old

Pno.

54 things

Pno.

molto accel.

15^{ma}

Right hand - keep the pattern but improvise the notes in a wild and sloppy manner

56 *mp* Much Slower (quarter = c.65)

S And is gone,

Pno.

fff L.V.

pp

[SEE NOTE BELOW]

15^{ma}

8va

* Measure 54 note: With palm of hand, strike far right edge of piano (past keys) to create a percussive "thud" sound.

59

S

Delicate

Pno.

61

S

Gone with her little chin

Pno.

63

S

Thrust a - head of her And her

Pno.

Gone

65

S

soft hair blowing care less

Pno.

67

S

A little slower

Pno.

pp

69

S

pp

From un - der a wide hat,

Pno.

ppp

A little faster

S 71 *mp*
Dan-cer, sing - er a

Pno. *p mp p*
8va-----, 8va-----, (roll down)

S 75 *mf*
lau - ghing pas-sion-ate lo - ver. Were there ten men or a hun - dred hunt-ing

Pno.

S 79
Chick? Were there five men or fif - ty with ach - ing hearts?

Pno. *ppp*
15ma-----, 8va-----

Gone

82 *Slower*
mp

S
Ev - ery - bo - dy loved Chick Lor - i - mer.

Pno. *p* *8va* *5* *ppp*
8vb

85 *p*

S
No - bo - dy knows where she's gone.

Pno. *p* *8va* *5* *ppp* *rit.*
8vb

88 *a tempo*

S

Pno. *pp* *8va* *5*
8vb

90

S

(8va)

rit.

Pno.

ppp

93

S

8va

a tempo

pp

Pno.

8vb

96

S

(8va)

rit.

Pno.

Gone

98

S

(8^{va})

98

Pno.

Fading into the distance . . .

ppp

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

Chamfort

Carl Sandburg

Kurt Erickson

Delicate but dancelike (quarter = 75)

Soprano

Piano

p Shimmering *mp* *mf* *mp*

With pedal throughout

S

mp *mf*

There's Cham - fort. _____ He's a sam - ple. _____

Pno.

mf *mp*

S

13

Locked him - self in his li - bra - ry with a

Pno.

mf *mp* *mf* *mp* *p*

Chamfort

19
S
gun, Shot off his nose and shot out his right eye.

19
Pno.
mf *mp*

25
S
mp 3
And this Cham - fort knew

25
Pno.
mf *mp* *mf*

31
S
mf 3 3
how to write And thou - sands read his

31
Pno.
p

Chamfort

36

S

books on ___ how ___ to live, ___ But he ___ him -

Pno.

mf

41

S

self did-n't know how to die ___ by ___ force ___ of his own ___

Pno.

46

S

___ hand ___ see? ___

Pno.

f

sva

Chamfort

52

S

Pno.

rit.

52 (*8va*)

58 *mp*

S

a tempo

Pno.

pp

58

64

S

Pno.

mp

64

pool on the car - pet _____ Cool as an _____ Ap - ril fore -

Chamfort

70

S

noon, _____ Talk - ing ___ and talk - ing ___ gay max - ims and grim

Pno.

p *pp*

76

S

ep-i-grams. _____ Well, he wore

Pno.

p *mf* *mp* *p*

82

S

ban - da - ges ov - ver his nose _____ and right eye, _____ Drank

Pno.

mf *mp*

Chamfort

(free and unmeasured)

88

S

cof - fee and chat - ted ma - - - - - ny

Pno.

88

92

S

years _____ With men _____ and wo - men _____

mf

Pno.

92

p *mf*

98

S

_____ who loved _____ him _____ Be - cause he _____ laughed _____

mf *f*

Pno.

98

mp

Chamfort

104 *mp*
S and dai - ly dared Death: _____

104 *mf* *mp* *p*
Pno.

110 *mf*
S "Come and take me." _____ "Come and take me." _____

110
Pno.

116 *mp*
S "Come and take me." _____

116 *pp* *mp*
Pno.

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

Chamfort

123

S

Pno.

mf *mp* *mf* *mp*

129

S

Pno.

mf *mp* *mf* *mp*

8va

134

S

Pno.

Chamfort

140

S

140

Pno.

ppp

pppp

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Chamfort". It consists of two staves: a vocal staff (S) and a piano staff (Pno.). The vocal staff begins at measure 140 and contains four measures of whole rests. The piano staff also begins at measure 140 and contains four measures. The right hand of the piano part plays a melodic line: the first measure has a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter rest; the second measure has eighth notes G4, A4, B4, and C5; the third measure has eighth notes B4, A4, G4, and F4; the fourth measure has a quarter note E4, an eighth note D4, and a quarter rest. The left hand of the piano part has whole rests in all four measures. Dynamics are indicated as *ppp* in the first measure and *pppp* in the fourth measure.

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

Jack

Carl Sandburg

Kurt Erickson

With energy and even a little wildness (quarter - 85)

Soprano

Piano

f

S

Jack was a swarthy, swaggering son-of-a-gun. He

Pno.

mf

S

worked thirty years on the railroad,

Pno.

Jack

7

S

ten hou-rs a day, and his

Pno.

9

S

hands were tough-er than sole lea-ther.

Pno.

11

S

Pno.

f *mf*

Jack

13

S

He mar - ried a tough

Pno.

mp

15

S

wo - - man and they had eight chil - dren and the

Pno.

mf

17

S

wo - man died and the chil - dren grew up and

Pno.

p

Jack

19

S

went a - way and wrote the old man ev - ery

Pno.

20

S

two years.

Pno.

f

21

S

Pno.

mp

Jack

22

S

Pno.

mp

p

24

S

mp

He died in the poor - house

Pno.

mp

26

S

sit - ting on a bench in the sun tel - ling

Pno.

Jack

28

S

re - min - es - cences to oth - er old men whose

Pno.

mf *mp*

30

S

wo - men were dead and chil - dren scat - - - - - tered.

Pno.

32

S

There was joy

Pno.

f *mf*

Jack

34

S

on his face when he died as there was

Pno.

p

36

S

joy on his face when he

Pno.

mp

38

S

lived he was a swarthy, swaggering

Pno.

mf

Jack

40

S

son - - - of - - a - - gun.

Pno.

p

42

S

Pno.

mp

44

S

Pno.

Jack

46

S

Pno.

This system contains measures 46 and 47. The Soprano part (S) is a single line with a treble clef, showing rests for both measures. The Piano part (Pno.) consists of two staves. The upper staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth notes and some accidentals (flats). The lower staff has a bass clef and contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

48

S

Pno.

This system contains measures 48 and 49. The Soprano part (S) is a single line with a treble clef, showing rests for both measures. The Piano part (Pno.) consists of two staves. The upper staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth notes and some accidentals (sharps and flats). The lower staff has a bass clef and contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

50

S

Pno.

This system contains measures 50 and 51. The Soprano part (S) is a single line with a treble clef, showing rests for both measures. The Piano part (Pno.) consists of two staves. The upper staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth notes and some accidentals (flats and sharps). The lower staff has a bass clef and contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

Jack

52

S

"There was joy on his face . . . "

Pno.

53

S

Pno.

rit.

pp

ff

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

I Sang To You And The Moon

Carl Sandburg

Kurt Erickson

Slow, luxuriant, and spacious

Quarter = about 70

mp

Soprano

Piano 1

Musical score for Soprano and Piano 1, measures 1-8. The Soprano part begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics "I sang to you and the moon". The Piano 1 part features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *p* and *mp*. A large slur covers the piano accompaniment. A watermark "FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY" is visible across the score.

With pedal blurred throughout

Musical score for Soprano and Piano 1, measures 9-15. The Soprano part has lyrics "But on-ly the moon re - mem - bers". The Piano 1 part includes a triplet in measure 10 and a quintuplet in measure 14. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *mp*. Performance markings include *a tempo*, *rit.*, and *8va*. A watermark "FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY" is visible across the score.

Musical score for Soprano and Piano 1, measures 16-22. The Soprano part has lyrics "I sang O reck-less free - heart-ed free - throat-ed rhy-thms". The Piano 1 part includes a quintuplet in measure 19. Dynamics include *mp*, *pp*, and *mf*. Performance markings include *accel.*, *rit.*, and *a tempo*. A watermark "FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY" is visible across the score.

I Sang to You and the Moon

23 *mp* 3 *mp*

S E - ven the moon re - mem - bers them And is kind to

Pno. 1 *8va* 5 L.V. *pp*

With pedal blurred throughout

30 me.

Pno. 1

33

Pno. 1

I Sang to You and the Moon

36 *mf*

S I sang to you_____

Pno. 1 *p*

40

S _____ and the moon I sang to you_____

Pno. 1 *mp*

44

S _____ and the moon_____

Pno. 1

I Sang to You and the Moon

48 *f*

S I sang to you _____ and the moon _____

Pno. 1 *mf*

52 *rit.* *a tempo*

S

Pno. 1 *ff*

56 *mp*

S I

Pno. 1 *mp*

I Sang to You and the Moon

60

S

sang to you _____ and the _____ moon _____

Pno. 1

64

S

Pno. 1

p

68

S

Pno. 1

I Sang to You and the Moon

72 *p*

S

Ahh

Pno. 1

76

S

Ahh

Pno. 1

45

80

S

Ahh

Pno. 1

I Sang to You and the Moon

84

S

Pno. 1

88

S

Repeat as many times as necessary, getting slower & softer as the energy of the piece dissipates

88

Pno. 1

pp

92

S

92

Slow

Pno. 1

Still keep pedal down

