

A MONTH HAS PASSED  
(aria for Soprano)

from

THE GOLDEN GATE  
opera in two acts

music by  
CONRAD CUMMINGS

libretto from the novel-in-verse by  
VIKRAM SETH  
adapted by the composer





## **Composer's Note**

Vikram Seth's best-selling novel-in-verse about love and loss in San Francisco in the 1980's, "The Golden Gate," touches on all the nostalgia I feel for my home town and reminds me acutely of the adventures of my younger life. Boys with girls, boys with boys, it's all there, along with the exhilaration and the heartbreak. Seth's verse makes these experiences sing; I've tried to capture in music their unique mixture of pathos and humor.

## **Feel Free to Contact Me**

Singers and pianists should feel free to contact me at [conrad@conradcummings.com](mailto:conrad@conradcummings.com) with any questions, reactions, or thoughts. I am always open to suggestions about customizing the vocal line to best suit your voice.

## **Synopsis**

Five twenty-somethings experience love, life, and loss in the magical and innocent San Francisco of the early 1980's. JOHN BROWN (baritone), handsome and successful, will discover too late the price of his emotional detachment. He meets LIZ DORATI (soprano) through a personals ad placed by his former college girlfriend JANET HAYAKAWA (mezzo), a sculptor and punk rock drummer. Meanwhile, John's best friend from college PHILIP WEISS (bass), reeling from a divorce which has left him the single parent of six-year-old PAUL WEISS (spoken role), begins a passionate relationship with ED DORATI (tenor), Liz's younger brother. Couples come apart; new couples form, families are created, friendships are severed. A tragic death leads John, always the outsider, to the promise of a deeper connection and a warmer life.

## **Where the Aria Comes in the Opera**

John and Liz's relationship has fallen apart and Liz has impulsively married Phil. Deeply hurt, John reconnects romantically with Jan. Though neither will put into words what they're feeling, it seems the two may finally be settling into the relationship they always should have had. Then Jan is tragically killed in a car crash. The loss shatters John and deeply affects all four friends. A month later, Liz reflects on their loss. (The Silver River is the Japanese term for the Milky Way.)



LIZ:

A month has passed. The moon is rising.  
A balmy night in late July  
Rests on the city, exorcising  
The summer fog. Around the sky  
The great imputed constellations,  
Differently seen by different nations,  
And that great current over all  
That Janet's grandmother would call  
The Silver River, faintly glowing,  
Counter the city's glittering grid.  
The Transamerica Pyramid  
Spears up in light. A breeze is flowing  
(Quiet as love that's left unsaid)  
Through the straight streets. And Jan is dead.

— from Vikram Seth's novel-in-verse "The Golden Gate," Chapter 13, Verse 1



# A MONTH HAS PASSED

## (aria for Soprano)

version 6/28/15

music by CONRAD CUMMINGS

Lyrics from the novel-in-verse by VIKRAM SETH adapted by the composer

*slow* ♩ = 54      *p*      *very long* \*      *very long* \*      *poco meno mosso* ♩ = 52      *rallent* -----

Liz (Soprano)

A month has passed. The moon is ris - ing. A balm - y night

Piano

*p*      *p*

(\* these two fermatas can each be held for three or three-and-a-half beats in tempo)

5 ----- ♩ = 48      *mp*      *poco meno mosso* ♩ = 46      *p*

Liz

in late Ju - ly Rests on the cit - y, ex - or - cis - ing

Pno.

*mp*      *p*

*rallent* ..... ♩ = 40      *tempo primo* ♩ = 54      *poco rallent* ..... ♩ = 48

10 *mp* *p* *long* *p*

Liz The sum-mer fog. A - round the sky The

Pno. *mp* *p* *long* *p*

*poco a poco accel* ..... ♩ = 54 (you can take almost a beat of pause here) ↓

15 *mp* *p*

Liz great im - pu - ted con - stel - la - tions, Dif - 'rent - ly seen by dif - 'rent na - tions, And

Pno. *mp* *p*

*poco a poco rallent*

19 *f*

Liz that great cur - rent o - ver all That Jan - et's grand - moth - er would call The

Pno. *f*



-----  $\text{♩} = 44$

23 *mp* *pp*

Liz Sil-ver Riv-er, faint-ly glow ing, Coun-ter the cit-y's glit-ter-ing grid.

Pno. *mp* *pp*

(you can take time here)

*rallent* -----  $\text{♩} = 40$  *moving ahead*  $\text{♩} = 50$

28 *pp* *mp* *p* *not too long* *p*

Liz The Trans-a-mer-i-ca Pyr-a-mid Spears up in light. A breeze is flow ing

Pno. *mp* *p* *not too long* *p*

33 *rallent* -----  $\text{♩} = 46$

Liz (Qui-et as love that's left un-said) Through the

Pno.

**allargando**  
♩ = 40 or less

*moving ahead*  
♩ = 48

38

Liz

straight streets. \_\_\_\_\_

And Jan is dead.

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*very long*

43

Pno.

48

Pno.

