

Jeffrey Miller, "An Idle Hour" from John Clare Songs (2006)

The text of "An Idle Hour" is by John Clare (1793-1864), who was known in his lifetime as the "peasant poet," and whose early editors often felt they needed, due to Clare's background and lack of formal education, to correct his rustic vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. His poetry often reflects a very personal view of nineteenth century rural England, and it is remarkable that, during the 27 years of his life during which he was institutionalized, he continued to produce lucid and perceptive poetry of the highest quality. I have attempted to mirror Clare's direct and observational manner in my setting.

Jeffrey Miller has composed works ranging from band and orchestra to solo instruments and voice. He holds a Ph.D. in composition from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, and has taught at Brooklyn College, Knox College, and California State University, East Bay. He is also a former artistic co-director and executive director of Composers, Inc. His music has been performed throughout the United States, and he has received commissions from the Irving M. Klein String Competition, Musicians' Accord, and the Nova Singers. Read more at jeffreymillermusic.com.