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**David Leisner**

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**Three James Tate  
Songs**

for Medium Voice and Guitar



for David Starobin and Patrick Mason

# Three James Tate Songs

for medium voice and guitar

Duration: c. 11'

James Tate

## I. I Can't Speak for the Wind

David Leisner

Freely, ♩ = ca. 60

*p* *mf* *f*<sup>short</sup>

I don't know a-bout the cold. I am sad with-out hands. I can't

4 *Tempo giusto* *mf*

speak for the wind which chips a-way at me.

*mp* *mf*

8 *rit.* *Much faster, ♩ = 132* *f*

When pul-ling a po-ta-to I see on-ly the blue haze...

*mp* *sub. f*

Cowboy style

12

When

13 (♩ = ♩)

rid - ing an es - ca - la - tor, I ex - pect some - thing or - tho -

14

pe - dic to hap - pen.

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15

Sink-ing in quick - sand I'm a wild ap - pa - loo - sa. I

16

fly in - to a rage at the sight of a dou-ble-deck-er bus, I

19

want to eat my way through the Con - go,

20

I'm a dou - ble a - gent who tor - tures him - self and still will not speak.

23

*rit.*  
*dim.*

26

al - - - Tempo I (♩. = ca. 60) *p*  
I don't  
*mp*

## II. Never Again the Same

James Tate

Quite fast (♩ = 104), excited

David Leisner

Spoken - conversational With increasing urgency

*mf* Speaking of sunsets, last night's was shocking. I mean, sunsets aren't supposed

*p i p m*

*mf* let notes ring through each ♩

3 to frighten you, are they? Well, this one was terrifying.

*cresc.*

5 Peo-ple were\_screaming\_in the\_streets. Sure, it\_was beau-ti-ful, but

*f*

8 \_ far\_ too beau - ti - ful. It

10 was - - n't nat - u - ral. One

*ff*

2/6CXII 2/6CX 2/6CXIV 3/6CX 3/6CVIII 2/6CIII

*fff*

♣ = staccatissimo

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12

cli - max fol - lowed a - no - ther and then a -

15

no - ther un - til your knees went weak and you could-n't

17

breathe. The co - lours were def-i nite ly not of this

19

world, peaches drip-ping o-pi-um, pan-de-monium of tan-ge-rines,

Off the fingerboard, same finger pattern, moving the left hand higher and lower at a faster pace, while the right hand maintains the 16th-note rhythm at the same tempo. Rt. hand plays close to the bridge to allow for the highest pitches.

22

in - fer - no of i - ri - ses, Plu - to - nian em - er - alds, all

III. From an Island

James Tate

David Leisner

In a trance,  $\text{♩} = 60$

*mf*

*sim. sempre*

5 *mf*

Fogged in all day The

9 long low horns announce the pas

13 sing of another ghost-ship.

17 But we see nothing. It's as if a

21 cur-tain had been dropped. Go back into yourself, it

25 says. None of this mat-ters to you a-ny-more.

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29

All that dra - ma, col - or, move - ment - you can live with

33

out it. It was an il - lu - sion, a tease, a

37

lie. There is noth - ing out here but smoke -

41

from the rub - ble that was ev - ery thing, ev - ery - thing you want - ed,

45

ev - ery - thing you thought you need - ed. Ships pas - sing, for - get it. Chil - dren

49

bath - ing, there's no such thing. Let go, your is - land