

THE TRACKS OF ANGELS
for Bass-baritone and String Quartet

a setting of three sonnets by Francis Petrarch
translated by Nicholas Kilmer

WILLIAM HOLAB

Era il giorno ch' al sol si scoloraro
 Per la pietà del suo fattore i rai,
 Quando i' fui preso, e non me ne guardai,
 Che i be' vostri occhi, donna, mi legaro.

Tempo non mi pareva da far riparo
 Contra colpi d'Amor: però m'andai
 Secur, senza sospetto: onde i miei guai
 Nel commune dolor s'incominciaro.

Trovommi Amor del tutto disarmato
 Et aperta la via per gli occhi al core,
 Che di lagrime son fatti uscio e varco.

Però, al mio parer, non li fu onore
 Ferir me di saetta in quello stato,
 A voi armata non mostrar pur l'arco.

156

I' vidi i terra angelici costumi
 E celesti bellezze al mondo sole;
 Tal che di rimembrar mi giova e dole,
 Ché quant' io miro par sogni, ombre e fumi.

E vidi lagrimar que' duo bei lumi,
 C' han fatto mille volte invidia al sole;
 Et udii sospirando dir parole
 Che farian gire i monti e stare i fiumi.

Amor, senno, valor, pietate e doglia
 Facean piangendo un più dolce concento
 D'ogni altro che nel mondo udir si soglia;

Ed era il cielo a l'armonia sí 'ntento,
 Che non si vedea 'n ramo mover foglia;
 Tanta dolcessa avea pien l'aere e 'l vento!

250

Solea lontana in sonno consolarme
 Con quella dolce angelica sua vista
 Madonna; or mi spaventa e mi contrista,
 Né di duol né di téma posso aitar me:

Ché spesso nel suo volto veder parme
 Vera pietà con grave dolor mista,
 Et udir cose onde 'l cor fede acquista
 Che di gioia e di speme si disarme.

—Non ti sovèn di quella ultima sera,—
 Dice ella, —ch' i' lasciai li occhi tuoi molli,
 E sforzata dal tempo me n'andai?

I' non te 'l potei dir allor né volli,
 Or te 'l dico per cosa esperta e vera:
 Non sperar di vedermi in terra mai.

It was the day when the sun darkened, as God
 Himself vanished into death, when I was taken.
 I took myself in, Madam, bound by your looking at me.

It did not seem to me a fit time to take shelter
 Against the stroke of love; therefore I walked on,
 Without suspicion, vulnerable—whence woe to me
 Begins in our common sorrow.

Love found me altogether unarmed,
 My eyes, my heart's gates, opened by tears
 To give free passage toward the heart.

It was dishonorable of him to take me
 Unawares in my pity;
 Not to have tried his weapon on your armor.

156

I saw the tracks of angels in the earth,
 The beauty of heaven walking by itself on the world.
 Joke or sorrow now, it seems a dream
 Shadow, or smoke.

I saw a kind of rain that made the sun ashamed,
 And heard her, speaking sad words, make mountains
 Shift, the rivers stop.

Love, wisdom, valor, pity, pain,
 Made better harmony with weeping
 Than any other likely to be heard in the world.

And the air and the wind were so filled with this deep music
 No single leaf moved on its still branch.

250

I am awake. She has come to me
 In my sleep, as she used to do bringing comfort.
 I am left this time with terrified sadness.

Her face was sad. She looked on me with pity.

“Do you remember the last evening
 When I left you weeping? I
 Had known it was time.

I could not quite tell you then
 What must be true—
 You will not see me again in the world.”

Premiered on May 3, 1985 at Carnegie Recital Hall, New York City.
Benjamin Whiteley, bass-baritone and The Andiamo String Quartet:
Ryan Brown, John McGrosso, violins, Leslie Tomkins, viola, James Lee, cello

duration: ca. 12:00

written for and dedicated to Benjamin Whiteley

THE TRACKS OF ANGELS

Francis Petrarch

I
(no. 3)

William Holab

♩ = 72 - 80

ritard.

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as 72-80 beats per minute. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score includes a *poco* (slightly) marking and a *ritard.* (ritardando) marking. The piece concludes with a *n* (no) marking.

Poco meno mosso

Musical score for Baritone, Viola, and Cello. The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as *Poco meno mosso*. The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *f* (forte). The score includes a *p cantabile* marking. The lyrics are: "It was the day when the sun dark-ened, as God Him-self van-ished in-to death, when I was tak-en. ____".

Musical score for Baritone, Viola, and Cello. The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *p* (piano). The score includes a *f* marking and a *p* marking. The lyrics are: "I took my-self in, Mad-am, ____ bound by your look-ing at me.".

Musical score for measures 18-23. The score is in 4/4 time and features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, *f*, and *dim.*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it. The melody in the upper staves is characterized by a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the lower staves provide a steady accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 24-28. The score is in 4/4 time and features four staves. The vocal line is written in the bass clef and includes the lyrics: "It did not seem to me a fit time to take shelter Against the stroke of". The music includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *p*, and *f*. The accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in the treble and bass clefs.

Musical score for measures 29-33. The score is in 4/4 time and features four staves. The vocal line is written in the bass clef and includes the lyrics: "love; there - fore I walked on, With - out sus - pic - ion, —". The music includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *pesante*. A "solo" marking is present above the first measure of the vocal line. The accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in the treble and bass clefs.

poco accelerando

33

vul - ner-a-ble- whence woe to me Be - gins in our com - mon sor - row.

p *mf* *pp*

p *mf* *pp*

p *mf* *pp*

p *mf* *pp*

38 **Più mosso** *accelerando poco a poco* *cresc. poco a poco*

Love found me al - to - geth - er un - armed, My eyes, my

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

mp cresc. poco a poco

42 *ff*

heart's gates, o - pened by tears To give free pas - sage toward the heart.

ff

ff

ff

ff

4

46

49

ritard.

Meno mosso (♩ = 80)

p

It was dis-hon-or-a-ble

52

of him to take me Un-a-wares in my pi-ty; Not to have tried his

sul tasto

tr pp

(match Violin I)

6
62 (tasto)

(tasto)

p espr.

64

p espr.

66

p espr.

68 (tasto) *accelerando*

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

70 *ord.*

ord.

ord.

ord.

ord.

(3+2+2+2)

mf

72 $\text{♩} = 120-138$

I saw the tracks of an-gels in the

f *mf*

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

(3+2+2+2+3)

75

earth, The beaut-y of heav-en walk-ing by it-self on the

f *mf*

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

(3+2+2+3)
cresc.

(3+2+2+2+2)

77

world.

cresc. cantabile

cresc. cantabile

cresc. cantabile

cresc.

(3+2+2+3)

79 *f*

Joke or sor - row now, it seems a dream Shad - ow, or

f *sfz*

82 *♩ = ♩*

smoke.

pp dolce, cantabile

84 *♩ = ♩*

cresc. poco a poco

(cresc.) *f* *p*
 (cresc.) *f* *p*
 (cresc.) *f* *mp*
 (cresc.) *f* *p*

(3+2+2+2+2)

(3+3+3+3)

90 *mf*

I saw a kind of rain that made the sun a - shamed, _____ And heard

pizz. arco
 pizz. arco
 pizz. arco
 pizz. arco

92 *sub. p* *cresc.*

(2+2+2+3)

her, _____

sub. pp *cresc.* *f* *gliss.*
sub. pp *cresc.* *f* *gliss.*
sub. pp *cresc.* *f* *gliss.*
 solo *sub. mp* *cresc.* *f* *gliss.*

95 $(3+2+2+2)$ $(3+3+2)$ f speak - ing sad words, make moun - tains Shift, the riv - ers

98 p *cresc. poco a poco* stop. Love, wis - dom,

101 $(2+3+2+2)$ val - or, pi - ty, pain,

12

Poco meno mosso (♩ = 112)

104 *(cresc.)*

Made bet - ter har - mon - y with weep - - ing Than

(cresc.)

f

(cresc.)

f

(cresc.)

f sonabile

(cresc.)

f sonabile

a - ny oth - er like - ly to be heard in the world.

allargando

rit.

rit.

rit.

rit.

rit.

pp sotto voce

111

And the air and the
punta d' arco

fff *pp*

fff *pp*

fff *pp*

fff *pp*

114

wind were so filled with this deep mu - sic

p *p*

117

No sin - gle leaf moved on its still branch.

ord. *pp*

Poco meno mosso

120

Musical score for measures 120-124. The score is in 6/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) starts with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 120. The second staff (treble clef) also starts with *pp* and has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 120. The third staff (bass clef) starts with *pp* and has two triplet markings over eighth notes in measures 120 and 121. The fourth staff (bass clef) starts with *ppp* and features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 124. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

125

Musical score for measures 125-128. The score is in 6/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and has a half note in measure 125. The second staff (treble clef) starts with *mf* and has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 125. The third staff (bass clef) starts with *mf* and has a half note in measure 125. The fourth staff (bass clef) starts with *mf* and has a half note in measure 125. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

129

Musical score for measures 129-132. The score is in 6/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) starts with a *sub. p* dynamic and has a half note in measure 129. The second staff (treble clef) starts with *mp* and has a half note in measure 129. The third staff (bass clef) starts with *mp* and has a half note in measure 129. The fourth staff (bass clef) starts with *sub. p* and has a half note in measure 129. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

134

p

p

p

p

138

mp cresc. poco a poco

mp cresc. poco a poco

mp cresc. poco a poco

mf cantabile, cresc. poco a poco

142

ritard. **Ancora meno mosso—serene**

ff

ff

ff

ff

p

p

p

p

solo

16

146

Musical score for measures 146-150. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The music features a melodic line in the upper staves and a more rhythmic, bass-oriented line in the lower staves. There are several slurs and accents throughout the passage.

151

Musical score for measures 151-154. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The music continues with a melodic line in the upper staves and a more rhythmic, bass-oriented line in the lower staves. A "solo" marking is present in the Bass 1 staff at the beginning of measure 151.

155

Musical score for measures 155-158. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The music concludes with a final chord in all staves. The dynamic marking *ppp* is present in the final measure of each staff. The text "tutti al sord." is written above the final measure of the Treble 1 staff.

attacca

III
(no. 250)

Tempo rubato

160 *mp*

I am a - wake. She has come to me In my sleep, as she used to do bring-ing com-fort. ___

166

I am left this time with ter - ri - fied sad - ness. ___ Her

Vn. I

con sord.
p

Va.

con sord.
p

Vc.

con sord.
p

169

face was sad. ___ She looked on me with pi - - ty. ___

con sord.
p

$\text{♩} = \text{♩} (\text{♩} = 100-112)$

Semplice, ethereal

173

“Do you re - mem - - - ber the

Vln. I

mp

Vla.

mp

176

Bar. *mf*
 last e - ven - ing When I left you weep - ing?

Vln. I

Vla.

179 *mf*
 I Had _ known _ it was time. I could not quite tell you then _

mf

mf

mf

182
 _ What must be true- _ ten. ,

ff

f *ff*

f *ff*

f *ff*

Meno mosso

Tempo I (♩ = 100-112)

185

You will not see — me a - gain — in the world.”

non rit.

187