
Sid Richardson

On the Sea

for five male voices

2015

On the Sea

Ensemble:

2 Tenor
1 Baritone
2 Bass

Duration: *4 minutes, 30 seconds*

On the Sea

It keeps eternal whisperings around
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the spell
of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest shell
Be moved for days from where it sometime fell,
When last the winds of Heaven were unbound.
Oh ye! who have your eye-balls vexed and tired,
Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea --
Oh ye! whose ears are dinned with uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody --
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth and brood,
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quired!

by John Keats

This text is within the public domain.

Program Note:

The evocative, Romantic imagery of Keats' sonnet "On the Sea" informs the sound world and structure of this setting for five male voices. The work takes the shape of an isorhythmic motet with a tenor that is proportionally compressed as the piece develops. Several devices derivative of fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish practice, such as solmization and gematria, are employed throughout the tenor setting in a structural role. Over the course of the work, the cantus is woven more and more closely into the four-voice texture, culminating at the end in five-voice homophony that invokes the vastness of the ocean.

On the Sea

for Ensemble Amarcord

John Keats
(1795-1821)

$\text{♩} = 42$

Sid Richardson
(b. 1987)

Tenor I *p* *mf* *pp*
It keeps e - ter - nal whis-per - ings whis - per - ings

Tenor II

Baritone *p* *mf* *pp*
It keeps e - ter - - nal whis - per -

Bass I

Bass II

4
T. *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*
des - o - late shores whis - per - ings a - round des - o - late

T. *pp* *sempre tenuto* *p*
la fa mi

Bar. *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*
ings a - round whis - per - ings a - round it keeps des - o - late

B.

B.

7

T. *mp* *pp*
shores it keeps e - ter - - nal

T. - - -

Bar. *mp*
shores it keeps e - ter - -

B. *pp* *p*
shores keeps e - ter - -

B. *pp* *p*
shores keeps e - ter - -

10

T. *pp* *p*
shores whis - per - ings

T. des - - - o - - - late shores

Bar. *pp* *mp* *pp*
nal whis - per - -

B. *pp* *mp* *pp* *p*
nal whis - per - ings whis - per and

B. *pp* *mp* *pp*
nal whis - per - ings whis - per - -



Più animato

4

13

T.

T.

Bar.

B.

B.

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

16

T.

T.

Bar.

B.

B.

mp *p* *cresc.* *p* *cresc.* *mf* *pp*

19

T. *mf* *mp* *pp*
te leaves them their old shad - ow - y sound

T. *sub. p* *pp* *mp*
spell shad - - ow sound

B. *mp* *pp* *mp*
leaves them their shad- ow shad - ow - y sound

B. *p* *pp* *mp*
shad - - - - ow sound

22

T. *p* *mf* *pp* *mf* *p*
till the spell of He - ca - te leaves them their old shad - ow - y sound

T. *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*
shad - - - - ow - y sound

Bar. *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*
old sound

B. *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*
shad - ow - y sound

B. *pp* *mp* *p*
shad - ow - - - y sound

25

T. *mf* 'tis in such gen - tle tem - per

T. *p sempre* la fa mi

Bar. *pp* 'tis tem -

B. *pp* Of - ten 'tis tem -

B. *mf* 'tis gen - tle tem -

Subito agitato

28

T. *pp* found shell be moved

T. shell be moved

Bar. *mf* *pp* per found that scarce-ly will the ve - ry small-est shell be moved

B. *mf* *pp* per found scarce-ly shell be moved

B. *mf* *pp* per found scarce-ly the ve - ry small-est shell be moved