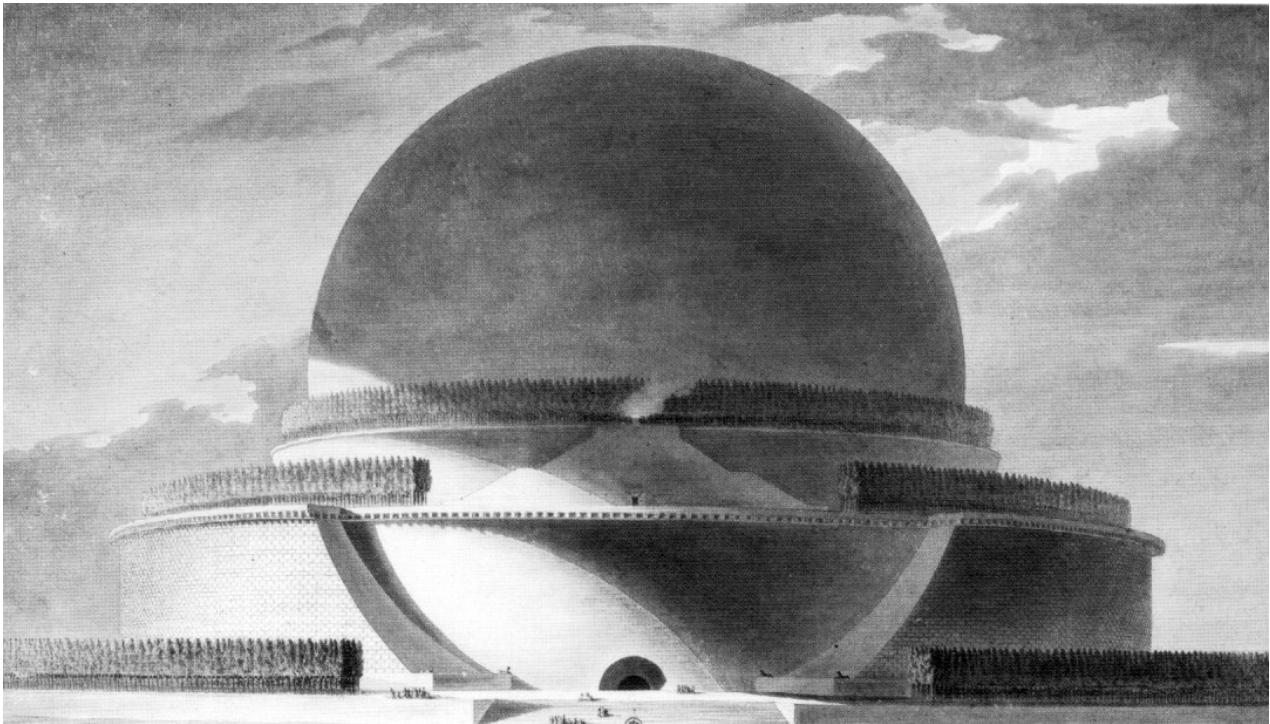


SCENES FROM THE  
LIFE OF BOULLÉE



ERIC SHANFIELD



# SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BOULÉE

## Book 1

Eric Shanfield | 2009.4 | 18'

poems by John Yau

Soprano

Electric Organ

*Scenes from the Life of Boullée, Book 1* sets the first four parts of John Yau's poem about the visionary eighteenth-century French architect Étienne-Louis Boullée for soprano and electric organ. Each of the songs explores the idea of a drone—sometimes as a single continuous presence, sometimes broken up into pulsations, sometimes shifting, but always present.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BOULLÉE  
by John Yau

1

Roof shaped like a strawberry. Hurriedly torn paper towel. The queen's staircase does not lead to the king's chambers. The traditional requirements of comfort and convenience. A kind of sleepwalking echoed by a line in history. Stands on a lovesick giant and calls himself a hero. Sound of annoyance at an unforeseen circumstance becoming an inevitable consequence. Wine dripping off the formica table onto the shag rug after hitting the unused wooden chair covered with cigarette burns. A dream heard second hand. An extra coat hanger. Only half the story is true. The rest is necessary, like clouds on a cloudy day.

2

Pieces of a piece. The face in the window larger than the window facing in. A mermaid selling cheese in a laundromat in Ottawa. A cop who looks as if he has to go to the bathroom. A bony hand dangling from a red station wagon. Riding in a cab with a junkie who wants an alarm clock. Breaking a promise and counting the pieces. Her harsh lipstick crumbling over her harsher smile. Remnants of a collision in a galaxy whose name is a number. Eeriness of a city with only one light. The kinds of certainty available in a drugstore. Jumbo food. With only one light on. A junkie dangling from an alarm clock. Using the laundromat because there are no bathrooms around. Stealing the mermaid's cheese. Breaking into her smile. The kinds of certainty available in a supermarket, a newspaper, a lover. A young cop who looks as if he has gone. The square face in the round window. Pieces of a blue piece.

3

Without noticing the fire descending into the subway station. Descending into the copper sunlight. Going back again and again. Their voices. One dripping. The other dribbling to a stop. Lengthening each of the sounds into a staircase. I think there's three volumes. A salmon. A sale's on. Ceylon. Existence being the only record of their names. Shoes seen by the side of the highway leading to Las Vegas. Faces remembered from last Thursday. Talking to an imaginary friend in your sleep. Waking up and feeling the sweat. The sweet surrounding your skin. Adding to the pile. The only thing invisible for miles. In every kind of light. The light of topless dancing. Only half of you is there. No music sparring with traffic. Enters in a suit the color of coffee, face the color of masking tape. Everyone looks like you, today. Even people I don't like.

4

A room with open windows facing a street where dogs gather at night. Falling curtain. Refrigerator whose parts can't be replaced. A full garbage bag waiting for someone by not waiting for anything. Smoke on a horizon that exists as a footnote. Unable to see all of the sky all at once, how the city breaks it into the pieces needed to cross the street. Ridden speechless. Frogs frozen under the curving black marble table. Nothing closer than the next smile to break the back of the king. Residential talons. An ashtray full of rubber bands. Happy with his gladiatorial entertainment. Happy with the smoke blocking out the sun. When a place becomes a person whose place it is.

# SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BOULLÉE

1

John Yau

Eric Shanfield

♩=160

Soprano

Electric Organ

*f*

Roof

shaped like a

5

Sop.

straw-ber-ry.

Hur-ried-ly torn\_\_ pa - per towel.\_\_

E. Org.

10

Sop.

The queen's stair-case\_\_ does not lead\_\_ to the king's

E. Org.

15

Sop.

cham - bers.

E. Org.

19

Sop.

The tra-di-tion-al re-quire-ments of

E. Org.

24

Sop.

com-fort and con-ve-ni-ence. A kind of sleep-walk-ing e-choed by a

E. Org.

29

Sop.

line in his-tory.

E. Org.

34

Sop.

Stands on a

E. Org.

37

Sop. love - sick gi - ant and calls him - self a he - ro.

E. Org.

40

Sop. Sound of an - noy - ance at an un - for - seen

E. Org.

45

Sop. cir - cum - stance be - com - ing an in - e - vi - ta - ble con - se - quence.

E. Org.

49

Sop.

E. Org.

53

Sop. Wine drip - ping off the for - mi - ca ta - ble

E. Org.

56

Sop. on - to the shag rug af - ter hit - ting the un - used

E. Org.

59

Sop. wood-en chair co - vered with ci - ga-rette burns. A dream

E. Org.

63

Sop. heard se - cond hand. An ex - tra coat

E. Org.



68

Sop. hang - er.

E. Org. *mp*

73

Sop. *mp*  
On - ly half the sto-ry is true.

E. Org.

77

Sop.

E. Org.

81

Sop. *f*  
The rest is ne - ces - sa - ry,

E. Org. *f*

86

Sop.

like clouds on a clou - dy day.

E. Org.

*mp*

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the Soprano (Sop.) and the bottom staff is for the E. Org. (E. Organ). The Soprano part begins at measure 86 with a whole rest, followed by a half note 'like', a quarter note 'clouds', a quarter note 'on', a quarter note 'a', a quarter note 'clou -', a quarter note 'dy', and a half note 'day.' with a fermata. A dynamic marking of *mp* is placed above the Soprano staff. The E. Org. part features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *mp* is placed above the E. Org. staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

# SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BOULLÉE

John Yau

Eric Shanfield

♩=132

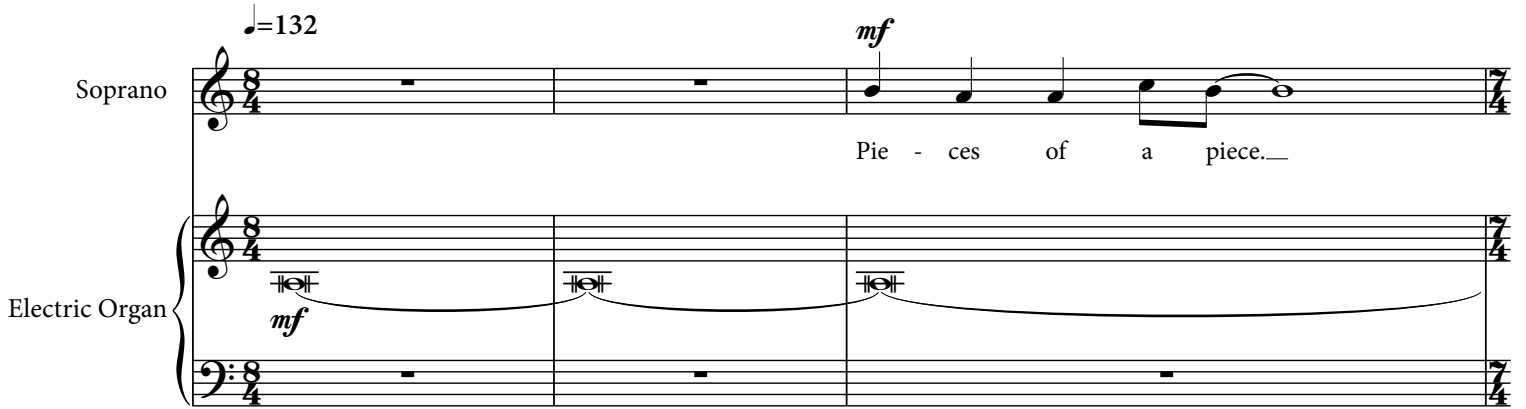
*mf*

Soprano

Pie - ces of a piece. —

Electric Organ

*mf*



4

Sop.

The face in the win - dow —

E. Org.



6

Sop.

lar - ger than — the win - dow fa - cing in. —

E. Org.



8

Sop.

— A mer maid sell - ing cheese

E. Org.



10

Sop.

in a laun - dro - mat in O (Ah) O - tta - wa.

E. Org.

12

Sop.

E. Org.

14

Sop.

A cop who looks\_ as if he has to go\_ to the bath - room.

E. Org.

16

Sop.

E. Org.

18

Sop.

A bo - ny hand\_ da

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 18 and 19. The soprano part begins with a half note 'A', followed by a quarter note 'bo', an eighth note 'ny', and a dotted quarter note 'hand'. After a bar rest, it continues with a dotted quarter note 'da' followed by a series of eighth notes. The organ part features a complex texture with sixteenth and thirty-second notes in both hands, and a steady bass line of dotted half notes.

20

Sop.

ang - ling from a red sta - tion wa - gon.

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 20 and 21. The soprano part continues with a dotted quarter note 'ang', an eighth note 'ling', a quarter note 'from', a quarter note 'a', a quarter note 'red', an eighth note 'sta', an eighth note 'tion', a quarter note 'wa', and a quarter note 'gon'. The organ part continues with similar rhythmic patterns and chordal accompaniment.

22

Sop.

Ri - ding in a

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 22 and 23. The soprano part has a whole rest in measure 22, followed by a quarter note 'Ri', a quarter note 'ding', a quarter note 'in', and a quarter note 'a'. The organ part features a repeating rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the treble and dotted half notes in the bass.

24

Sop.

cab with a junk - ie who wants an a - larm clock.

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 24 and 25. The soprano part begins with a quarter note 'cab', followed by a quarter note 'with', a quarter note 'a', an eighth note 'junk', an eighth note 'ie', a quarter note 'who', a quarter note 'wants', a quarter note 'an', an eighth note 'a', an eighth note 'larm', and a quarter note 'clock'. The organ part continues with its characteristic rhythmic accompaniment.

26

Sop.

E. Org.

29 *mp*

Sop.

E. Org.

*mp*

Break - ing a pro - mise...

32

Sop.

E. Org.

and count-ing the pie - ces... Her harsh lip - stick crumb - ling o - ver her

34 *mf*

Sop.

E. Org.

*mf*

har - - - - - sher smile.

36

Sop.

Rem - nants of a col - li - sion in a ga - lax - y whose

E. Org.

38

Sop.

on - ly name is a num - ber.

E. Org.

40

Sop.

Ee - ri - ness of a ci - ty with

E. Org.

42

Sop.

on - ly one light.

E. Org.

44

Sop. *f*

The kind of cer - tain - ty a -

E. Org. *f*

46

Sop. *f*

vai - la - ble in a drug - store.

E. Org. *f*

48

Sop. *f*

Jum - bo food.

E. Org. *f*

50

Sop. *f*

With on - ly one light on.

E. Org. *f*



52

Sop. A junk - ie dang - ling from an a - larm clock.

E. Org.

54

Sop.

E. Org.

57 *mp*

Sop. U - sing the laun - dro - mat\_\_\_\_\_

E. Org. *mp*

61

Sop. be - cause there are no\_\_\_ bath-rooms a - round.\_

E. Org.

63

Sop. *mf*

Steal - ing the mer - maid's cheese.

E. Org. *mf*

65

Sop.

Break - ing in - to her smile.

E. Org.

67

Sop.

The kinds of cer - tain-ty a -

E. Org.

69

Sop.

vai - la - ble in a su - per-mar-ket, a news - pa - per, a

E. Org.

71

Sop. lo - ver.

E. Org.

73

Sop. A young cop— who

E. Org.

75

Sop. looks looks as if he has gone.

E. Org.

77

Sop. *f* The square face in the

E. Org. *f*

79

Sop.

round win - dow. Pie - ces of a blue

E. Org.

81

Sop.

piece.

E. Org.

# SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BOULLÉE

John Yau

Eric Shanfield

*♩* = 116

Soprano

*mf*

With - - -

Electric Organ

*mf*

7

Sop.

- out - - - no - ti - cing - - -

E. Org.

13

Sop.

the fire - - - de - scen - ding in - to the

E. Org.

19

Sop.

sub - way sta - tion.

E. Org.

25

Sop.

E. Org.

31

Sop.

De - - -

E. Org.

37

Sop.

- scen - - - ding in - to the cop - per

E. Org.

43

Sop.

sun - light.

E. Org.

49

Sop.

Go -

E. Org.

55

Sop.

ing back a - gain and a - gain.

E. Org.

61

Sop.

Their voi - ces.

E. Org.

67

Sop.

One drip - ping.

E. Org.

74

Sop.

The o - - ther drib - bling to a

E. Org.

80

Sop.

stop.

E. Org.

86

Sop.

E. Org.



92

Sop.

Length - en - ing — each

E. Org.

98

Sop.

of the sounds — in - to a stair - case. I

E. Org.

104

Sop.

think there's three vol - umes.

E. Org.

110

Sop.

E. Org.

116

Sop.

A sal-mon. A sale's on. Cey-lon.

E. Org.

122

Sop.

E. Org.

128

Sop.

Ex - - - is - tence be-ing the on - ly

E. Org.

134

Sop.

re - cord of their names. Shoes seen by the

E. Org.

140

Sop.

side of the high-way lead - ing to Las Ve - gas.

E. Org.

146

Sop.

E. Org.

152

Sop.

E. Org.

158

Sop.

E. Org.

164

Sop.

E. Org.

170

Sop.

Fa - ces re - mem - bered from last Thurs-day.

E. Org.

176

Sop.

Talk - ing to an i - ma - gi - na - ry friend in your

E. Org.

182

Sop.

sleep. Wa - king up and

E. Org.

188

Sop.

feel - ing the sweat. The

E. Org.

194

Sop.

sweet sur - roun - ding your skin.

E. Org.

200

Sop.

— Add - ing to the

E. Org.

206

Sop.

pile. The on - - ly thing in -

E. Org.

211

Sop.

vi - si - ble for miles.

E. Org.

217

Sop.

In ev - ery

E. Org.

223

Sop.

kind of light. The

E. Org.

229

Sop.

light of top - less dan - cing.

E. Org.

236

Sop.

On - ly half of you is there.

E. Org.

242

Sop.

E. Org.

248

Sop.

E. Org.


254


Sop.

No mu - sic spar - ring with traf - fic.


E. Org.


260

Sop.  En - - ters in a suit the

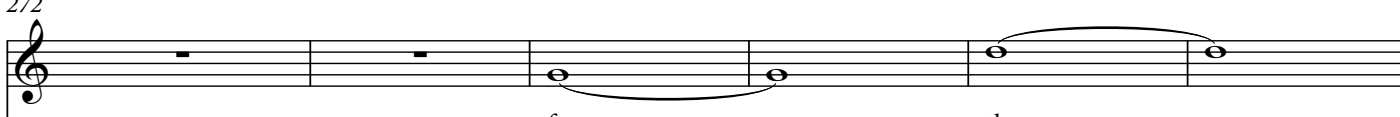
E. Org. 


266

Sop.  co - lor of cof - fee,


E. Org. 


272

Sop.  face the

E. Org. 

278

Sop.  co - lor of mask - ing tape. Ev - ery - one looks like

E. Org. 



284

Sop.

you, to - day. — E - ven peo - ple I don't like. —

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 284 to 289. The soprano part begins with a half note 'you', followed by a quarter note 'to', a quarter note 'day', and a half note with a fermata. The lyrics continue with 'E - ven peo - ple I don't like.' The organ part consists of six measures. The right hand has a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 285 and various chords and intervals. The left hand has a steady eighth-note bass line with a half-note accompaniment.

290

Sop.

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 290 to 295. The soprano part is silent, indicated by a whole rest in each measure. The organ part continues with six measures of complex texture, featuring multiple voices in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line.

296

Sop.

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 296 to 301. The soprano part is silent, indicated by a whole rest in each measure. The organ part continues with six measures of complex texture, featuring multiple voices in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line.

302

Sop.

E. Org.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 302 to 307. The soprano part is silent, indicated by a whole rest in each measure. The organ part continues with six measures of complex texture, featuring multiple voices in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line.

# SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BOULLÉE

4

John Yau

Eric Shanfield

$\text{♩} = 100$

Soprano

*mp*

A room with o - pen win-dows

Electric Organ

*mp*

11

Sop.

fa - cing a street where dogs ga - ther at night.

E. Org.

21

Sop.

Fall - ing cur-tain. Re-

*(8va al fine)*

E. Org.

*mp*

31

Sop.

fri - ger - a - tor whose parts can't be re - placed.

E. Org.

41

Sop.

A full gar-bage bag — wait-ing — for some - one by not wait-ing for a - ny-thing.

E. Org.

51

Sop.

E. Org.

59

Sop.

Smoke on a ho - ri - zon that — ex - ists — as a foot - note. Un

E. Org.

67

Sop.

a - ble to see all of the sky all at once,


E. Org.

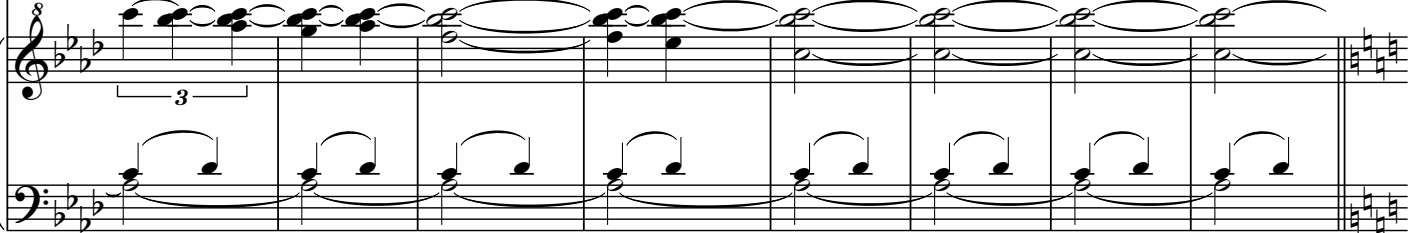
75

Sop.  how the ci - ty breaks \_\_\_\_\_ it

E. Org. 

83

Sop.  in - to the pie - ces need - ed to cross the street. \_\_\_\_\_


E. Org. 

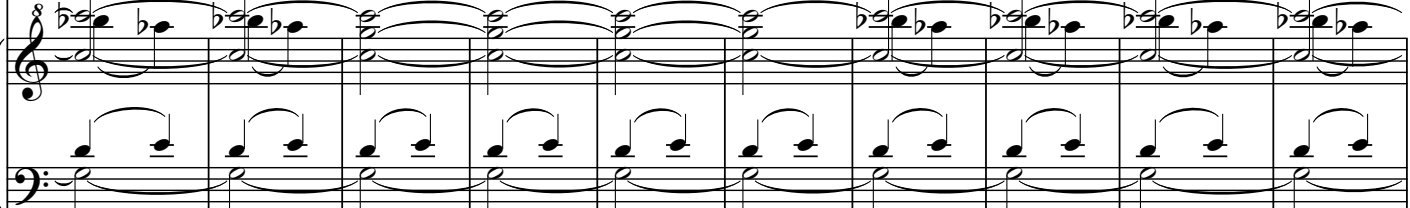
91

Sop.  Rid - den

E. Org. 

101

Sop.  speech-less. \_\_\_\_\_ Frogs fro - zen un - der the curv - ing

E. Org. 

111

Sop. black mar - ble ta - ble. No-thing clo-ser than

E. Org.

121

Sop. the next smile to break the back of the king.

E. Org.

130

Sop. Re - si - den - tial

E. Org.

140

Sop. ta - lons. An ash - tray full of rub - ber

E. Org.

150

Sop. bands. \_\_\_\_\_ Hap - py

E. Org.

159

Sop. with his glad - ia - to - ri - al en - ter - tain - ment.

E. Org.

167

Sop. Hap - py with the smoke block - ing out

E. Org.

175

Sop. the sun. \_\_\_\_\_

E. Org.

184

Sop.

When a place \_\_\_\_\_ be - comes a per - son whose place

E. Org.

193

Sop.

it is.

E. Org.