

STILL MORNING

ERIC SHANFIELD

STILL MORNING

Eric Shanfield | ENS.2007.4a | 6'

poems by Yvor Winters

Soprano *or* Tenor

Bass Oboe

Amplified Viola

Farfisa Organ

>All grace notes are played before the beat.

>The vocalist and entire ensemble may be amplified.

>Bass oboe sounds one octave lower than written.

>Viola should be amplified with a contact mic, John Cale style. A distortion pedal may be used.

>The farfisa should have a rough sound similar to early Velvet Underground or Philip Glass.

>If bass oboe, amplified viola, and farfisa organ are not all available, the piece should not be performed.

The unusual ensemble is the entire point. There is another, acoustic version for voice with clarinet and piano (ENS.2007.4b).

It was in *Still Morning* I first found a way to fuse my interest in repetitive forms with the freer approach I'd been taking in my vocal music. At the time I was listening to a lot of Webern, whose music I love but whose harmonic and melodic approach is foreign to my own sensibilities, and as a lover of miniatures I wondered, can there be a tiny minimalism? Can Webern and Philip Glass be made to coexist?

The text is by American poet Yvor Winters, whose shockingly brief book, *The Magpie's Shadow*—an imagist collection comprised entirely of evocative six-syllable poems—is set in its entirety. Arranged into three parts following the seasons (with summer and autumn elided), the instruments mostly play in unison, though they occasionally comment on and decorate the vocal part. Nevertheless, while the vocal line ranges freely, the accompaniment is always one single line of obsessively repeated tiny musical phrases.

There are two versions of the work. There is a later, smoothed-out all-acoustic “classical” adaptation for clarinet and piano duo, but this is the original, featuring a highly unusual ensemble of bass oboe, amplified viola, and farfisa organ inspired by the Velvet Underground and early Philip Glass.

STILL MORNING
music by Eric Shanfield
poems by Yvor Winters

The Magpie's Shadow

I. In Winter

Myself
Pale mornings, and
I rise.

Still Morning
Snow air—my fingers curl.

Awakening
New snow, O pine of dawn!

Winter Echo
Thin air! My mind is gone.

The Hunter
Run! In the magpie's shadow.

No Being
I, bent. Thin nights receding.

II. In Spring

Spring
I walk out the world's door.

May
Oh, evening in my hair!

Spring Rain
My doorframe smells of leaves.

Song
Why should I stop
for spring?

III. In Summer and Autumn

Sunrise
Pale bees! O whither now?

Fields
I did not pick
a flower.

At Evening
Like leaves my feet passed by.

Cool Nights
At night bare feet on flowers!

Sleep
Like winds my eyelids close.

The Aspen's Song
The summer holds me here.

The Walker
In dream my feet are still.

Blue Mountain
A deer walks that mountain.

God of Roads
I, peregrine of noon.

September
Faint gold! O think not here.

A Lady
She's sun on autumn leaves.

Alone
I saw day's shadow strike.

A Deer
The trees rose in the dawn.

Man in Desert
His feet run as eyes blink.

Desert
The tented autumn, gone!

The End
Dawn rose, and desert shrunk.

High Valleys
In sleep I filled these lands.

Awaiting Snow
The well of autumn—dry.

STILL MORNING

I. IN WINTER

Yvor Winters

Eric Shanfield

$\text{♩} = 104$

3 MYSELF *f*

Soprano
or Tenor

Bass Oboe

Viola

Farfisa Organ

This system of the musical score includes five staves. The top staff is for Soprano or Tenor, showing a rest followed by a half note 'Pale' with a fermata. The Bass Oboe, Viola, and Farfisa Organ staves all begin with a forte (*f*) dynamic and play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with slurs. The Farfisa Organ part is written in a grand staff with a treble and bass clef.

4

Sop.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

mor - nings, _____ and I rise. _____

This system continues the musical score. The Soprano part begins with the lyrics 'mor - nings, _____ and I rise. _____'. The instrumental parts (Bass Oboe, Viola, and Farfisa Organ) continue with their respective parts from the first system. The Farfisa Organ part remains in a grand staff.

STILL MORNING - I. IN WINTER

7 STILL MORNING

Sop. *f*
Snow air _____ my fin - gers curl. _____

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

12 AWAKENING

11 Sop. *f*
_____ New snow, _____ O pine of dawn! _____

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

17 WINTER ECHO

15

Sop.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 15 through 18. The Soprano part begins with a long note on a whole rest, marked with a fermata. The Bassoon, Viola, and Organ parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with the organ providing harmonic support in the bass register. The woodwinds and organ parts end with a repeat sign at the end of measure 18.

19

Sop.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

Thin air! — My mind is gone.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 19 through 22. The Soprano part has the lyrics "Thin air! — My mind is gone." and begins with a forte dynamic marking. The woodwinds and organ continue the rhythmic pattern established in the previous section. The organ part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The section concludes with a repeat sign at the end of measure 22.

23 THE HUNTER

Sop. *f*
Run!

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

This musical score for 'THE HUNTER' (measures 23-27) features a soprano line starting with a rest followed by a melodic phrase marked 'f' with the instruction 'Run!'. The woodwinds (Bass Oboe and Viola) play a rhythmic eighth-note accompaniment. The F. Org. provides a harmonic accompaniment in the bass register.

26

28 NO BEING

Sop.
In the mag - pie's sha - dow.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

This musical score for 'NO BEING' (measures 28-31) features a soprano line with the lyrics 'In the mag - pie's sha - dow.' and a key signature change to B major. The woodwinds and F. Org. continue with their accompaniment, with the F. Org. showing a key signature change in the bass line.

30 *f*

Sop. I, bent.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

34

Sop. Thin nights re - ce - ding.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

STILL MORNING

II. IN SPRING

Yvor Winters

Eric Shanfield

$\text{♩} = 132$

3 SPRING
f

Soprano
or Tenor

Bass Oboe

Viola

Farfisa Organ

4

Sop.

walk out the world's door.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

8 MAY

Sop. *f*
Oh, _____ eve - ning in my

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

11

14 SPRING RAIN

Sop.
hair! _____

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

STILL MORNING - II. IN SPRING

15

Sop. *f*
My door - frame_____

B. Ob.

Vla. *p cresc.*

F. Org.

19

Sop.
smells of leaves._____

B. Ob. *f*

Vla. *f*

F. Org.

23 SONG

f

Sop. Why should I _____

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

28

Sop. stop for spring? _____

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

STILL MORNING

III. IN SUMMER AND AUTUMN

Yvor Winters

Eric Shanfield

$\text{♩} = 108$

3 SUNRISE
mp

Soprano
or Tenor

Bass Oboe

Viola

Farfisa Organ

Pale _____ bees! _____

7

Sop.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

O whi - ther now? _____

12 FIELDS

Sop. *mf*
I _____ did not pick a flow - er.

B. Ob. *mf*

Vla. norm. *mf*

F. Org.

16 AT EVENING

Sop. *mf*
Like leaves _____ my feet passed by..

B. Ob. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

F. Org. *mf*

21 23 COOL NIGHTS *mf*

Sop. *mf*
At night

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

26

Sop. bare feet

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

30 33 SLEEP *mf*

Sop. on flow - ers! _____ Like *mf*

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

35

Sop. winds my eye - lids fall. _____

B. Ob.

Vla. *mf*

F. Org.

40 THE ASPEN'S SONG

Sop. *mf*
The sum-mer holds me here.

B. Ob. *mf*

Vla. pizz.

F. Org.

48 THE WALKER

45 Sop.

B. Ob.

Vla. arco

F. Org.

50 *mf*

Sop. In dream my feet

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

57

59 BLUE MOUNTAIN *mf*

Sop. are still. A

B. Ob. *mf*

Vla.

F. Org.

61

Sop. deer _____ walks _____ that moun - tain. _____

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

65 GOD OF ROADS

Sop.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

69

Sop. *mf*
I,

B. Ob. *p* *mf*

Vla.

F. Org.

73

Sop. per - e - grine of noon.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

79 SEPTEMBER
mp

77

Sop. *Faint gold!*

B. Ob. *mp*

Vla. *mp* sul pont.

F. Org. *mp*

83 A LADY
mf

81

Sop. *O think not here. She's_____*

B. Ob. *mf*

Vla. *mf* norm.

F. Org. *mf*

87

Sop. sun on au - tumn leaves.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

93 ALONE

Sop. I saw

B. Ob. *p* *cresc.*

Vla. *p cresc.*

F. Org. *p* *cresc.*

101 A DEER

98

Sop. *mf* day's _____ sha - dow strike.

B. Ob. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

F. Org. *mf*

103

Sop. *mf* The trees _____ rose in the dawn.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org. *p*

109 MAN IN DESERT

mf

Sop. *mf*
His feet run as—

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org. *mf*

114

117 DESERT

Sop. *f*
eyes blink.

B. Ob. *f*

Vla. *f*

F. Org. *f*

119 *f*

Sop. The tent - ed au - tumn, gone!

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

123 THE END

Sop. *ff*
Dawn rose, and

B. Ob. *ff*

Vla. *ff* *espress.*

F. Org. *ff*

127 *cresc.* *fff*

Sop. de - - - - - sert shrunk.

B. Ob. *cresc.* *fff*

Vla. *cresc.* *fff*

F. Org. *cresc.* *fff*

131 HIGH VALLEYS

Sop. *p*
In

B. Ob. *p*

Vla. flaut. *p norm.*

F. Org. *p sub.*

137

Sop. sleep I filled these lands.

B. Ob.

Vla.

F. Org.

142 AWAITING SNOW

Sop. The well

B. Ob. *cresc.*

Vla. *col legno* *f p f p f p f p* *sim.* *f p f p*

F. Org. *cresc.*

145 *mp*

Sop. of au - tumn:

B. Ob. *mp* *delesc.*

Vla. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

F. Org. *mp* *delesc.*

148 *rit.*
pp

Sop. dry.

B. Ob. *pp* 6 5 *mp* *pp*

Vla. arco *pp* *mp* *pp* molto sul pont. norm.

F. Org. *pp*