

BUFFALO SOLO

FOR SOLO HIGH VOICE
WITH LOW VOICE ACCOMPANIMENT

JARRAD POWELL

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for solo high voice with low voice accompaniment

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Buffalo Solo is for high voice (soprano, alto) singing primarily long tones and a low voice (tenor, baritone) drone accompaniment (other voice combinations are possible). The solo vocalist sings the words indicated in the score. Optionally, singers may choose their own words. Words chosen should be simple, primarily single syllable words, that invoke concrete things or phenomena from nature. The words included in the score are those originally chosen by Jessika Kenney for her premiere performance of this work. (A second copy of the score is included without words in case you would like to write in your own.)

The low voice provides a drone accompaniment. Once the soloist begins, the drone singer joins by sustaining the same note (an octave lower) throughout the given line of music. The drone singer uses simple vowel sounds, usually sustaining the same sound for the duration of a breath. The vowel sound used can be varied as desired or in response to some quality in the solo vocal part. Each line of the solo vocal part ends with a melismatic gesture that arrives at a new pitch. Once the soloist has sung this melisma and arrived at the new pitch, the drone singer must move to that new pitch. Movement for the drone singer should only happen after taking a breath and need not be simultaneous with the soloist. In fact, it is desirable that movement not occur simultaneously, but rather that the drone singer is still singing the previous pitch when the soloist arrives at the new pitch, so that an interval can be heard. As the soloist moves to the next line the drone singer can breathe and then also take up the new drone pitch.

It is desirable (though not necessary) that the drone singer be familiar with diaphonic or overtone singing. Occasionally the drone singer can bring out overtones in the drone sound, using primarily partials 1 through 4 (others might be used very sparingly). The diaphonic singing should be used sparingly in general, as a way of coloring the drone sound.

The piece should move slowly, with more emphasis on sound than on clarity of the words. We should assume that the thing itself is being invoked by the sound of its name, rather than by a referential meaning. Both singers should breathe when needed, yet maintain long-tone duration of breath as a focus. Generally, the singers will breathe at different times, though it might happen simultaneously by chance. The silence that results is accepted, though it is not sought. At the end, both singers should finish at more or less the same time.

The result of the piece is a gradual descent in pitch. By the end of the piece the pitch level should reach, or very nearly reach, the bottom of the singers' possible range. For the sake of notation, the score shows a specific starting pitch level. That can be varied, if desired, to accommodate the vocal range of different singers.

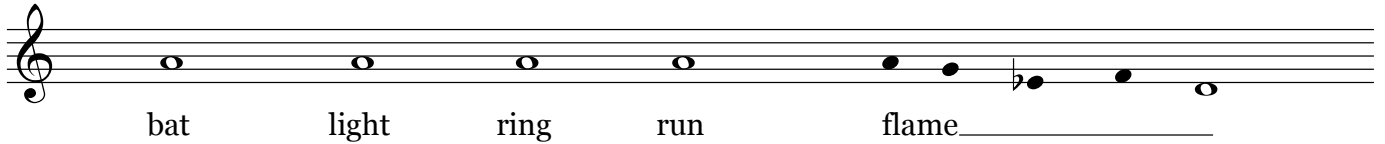
Buffalo Solo was originally composed for a dance theater piece by Scott/Powell Performance entitled *Natura Abolita (Nature Destroyed)*, with choreography by Mary Sheldon Scott, which premiered at On the Boards in Seattle in 2001.

Duration: ca. 7'35"

Buffalo Solo

for high voice with low voice accompaniment

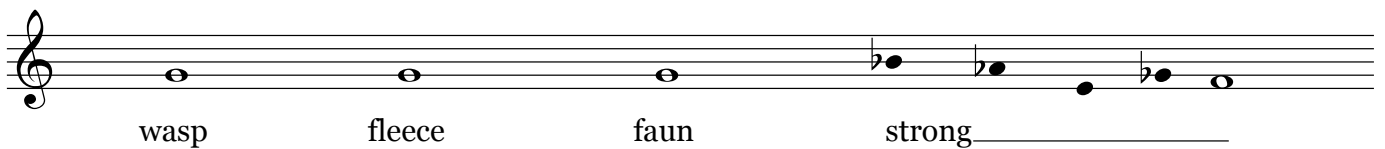
J. Powell



bat light ring run flame_____



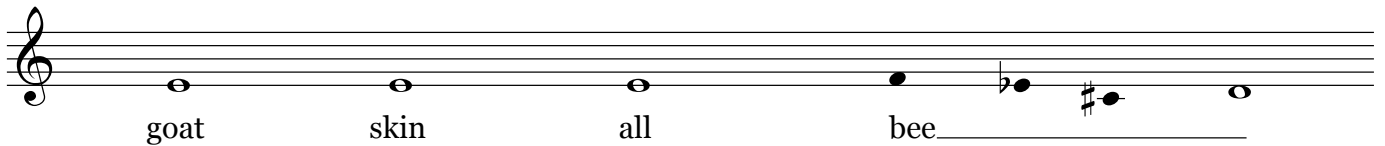
seed hot arc ash_____



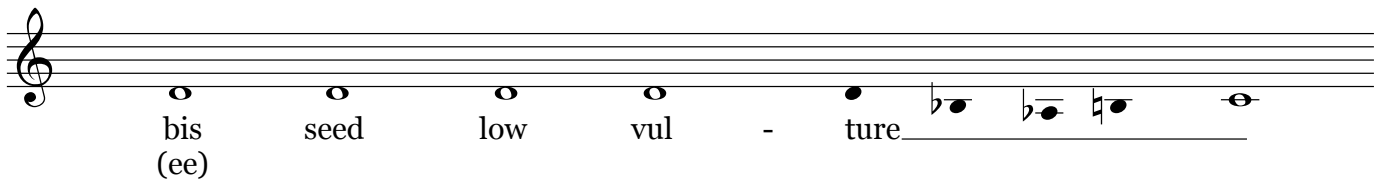
wasp fleece faun strong_____



grain flow fear brine_____



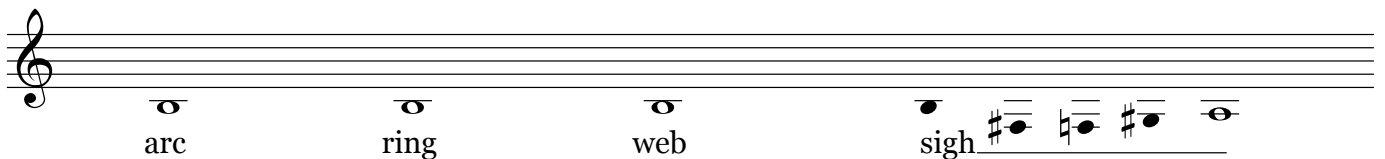
goat skin all bee_____



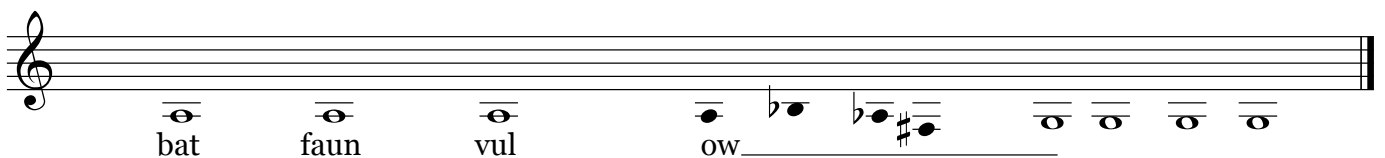
bis seed low vul - ture_____
(ee)



bent gol - den disk_____



arc ring web sigh_____



bat faun vul ow_____

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The musical score consists of ten staves, each beginning with a treble clef. The first four staves feature a sequence of four quarter notes (G4, A4, B4, C5) followed by a melodic phrase of six notes (D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5) tied to the end of the staff. The fifth staff continues with the same four quarter notes, followed by a melodic phrase of five notes (C5, D5, E5, F5, G5) tied to the end of the staff. The sixth staff continues with the same four quarter notes, followed by a melodic phrase of six notes (G5, A5, B5, C6, B5, A5) tied to the end of the staff. The seventh staff continues with the same four quarter notes, followed by a melodic phrase of six notes (G5, A5, B5, C6, B5, A5) tied to the end of the staff. The eighth staff continues with the same four quarter notes, followed by a melodic phrase of six notes (G5, A5, B5, C6, B5, A5) tied to the end of the staff. The ninth staff continues with the same four quarter notes, followed by a melodic phrase of six notes (G5, A5, B5, C6, B5, A5) tied to the end of the staff. The tenth staff continues with the same four quarter notes, followed by a melodic phrase of six notes (G5, A5, B5, C6, B5, A5) tied to the end of the staff.