

# RAPT AWAY TO DARKNESS

FOR VOICE

WITH MIXED FLEXIBLE ACCOMPANIMENT

JARRAD POWELL

## **rapt away to darkness**

**for voice with mixed flexible accompaniment**

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*Rapt away to darkness* is intended for a solo voice with a mixed instrumental accompaniment. The instrumentation and number of players for the accompaniment is flexible. It was originally written for the vocalist Jessika Kenney and the trio Doublends Vert, Annie Lewandowski (accordion), Adam Diller (clarinet), and Tom Swafford (violin). The text is from *Pythagorean Silence* by Susan Howe.

“Pythagorean Silence” by Susan Howe, from EUROPE OF TRUST, copyright © 1990 by Susan Howe. Used by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp.

The vocalist should perform the vocal part as written, but with a sense of freedom. The accompanying part is written as a counterpoint to the vocal melody, but it should not be performed literally as such. Instead the notes without stems should be treated as available pitches to be used for improvisation by the accompanying instruments. The overall dynamic is quiet or extremely quiet (though it might swell in relation to the vocalist at climactic points in the piece). The accompanying part should focus exclusively on long tones with no regard for rhythmic articulation. The emphasis should be on sparseness and subtle shifts of timbre. The instrumentalists should follow the vocalist, and when they decide to sound a pitch they can choose one of the available pitches in the corresponding measure of the score.

Pitches may be transposed to any octave. Vibrato, tremolo, trills, or other forms of ornamentation may be used sparingly. Since long tones are being played, it is natural that a chosen pitch might continue on past its measure of origin. That is fine. A player might introduce a pitch not notated in a given measure if it seems appropriate (this should be done very sparingly). Instrumentalists might anticipate a pitch in the vocal part as well as follow.

When notes have stems they are intended to be played as written. This occurs in measures 28-29 and measures 43 to the end. The vocalist and instrumentalists should be in sync rhythmically in these locations. Also, at these times, the integrity of the melodic line should be preserved in the instrumental parts, though the line may be transposed to a different octave as needed.

In measure 47 a dyad is played. The instrumentalists should decide on an orchestration for voicing the notes of the dyad so that there is a consistent sound for the short-long pattern of pulses. Again, transposition is ok. The orchestration might be shifted at some point. The 4th beat of measure 54 proved to be a good place to make a change, especially to emphasize the lower register. However, the players may make their own decision. From measure 47 to the end of the piece the notes in the accompanying part should be played somewhat detached, rather than legato. The players can experiment with that to achieve a unified aesthetic.

Duration: ca. 14'45"

# rapt away to darkness

for voice with mixed flexible accompaniment

text: from *Pythagorean Silence* by Susan Howe

J. Powell

slowly and freely ♩ = c. 30

Rapt\_ a-way to dark-ness at home in Per-i-lous He-li os\_ flees sec-ret-ly a-

notes without stems represent available pitches;  
see performance note for further explanation

5 cross a lost\_ coun-try Zo di-a-cal sign Sun this is a cir - cle and ser-pent in cir - cle fit\_

9 \_\_\_ for green fa - ble Fir-ma-ment and it was so Vis - sion-ar - y e-vents stretch-ing back to E - den

13 Thral-dom seeds to be\_ sort - ed Rapt\_ a-way to dark-ness at home in Per-i-lous

17

He-li os flees sec-ret-ly a - cross a lost coun-try Zo-di-i-cal sign Sun this is a cir - cle and

21

ser-pent in cir - cle fit for green fa - ble Fir-ma-ment and it was so Sneap - ing wind a

25

play as written; steady tempo

win - ter set - ting sal - ty sea thud - ding sal - ty sea thud - ding na - tio - nal an - them of my love Lu - ci - fer

29

rit. . . . . **B** a tempo (freely)

night so black the cen - tu - ries can - not see Rapt a - way to dark - ness at home in Per - i - lous

32

He-li os— flees sec-ret-ly a - cross a lost coun-try Zo-di-i-cal sign Sun this is a cir - cle and

36

ser-pent in cir - cle fit— for green fa - ble Fir-ma-ment— and it was so Vis - sion-ar - y e-vents

40

**C** play as written; steady tempo

stretch-ing back to E - den Thral-dom seeds to be— sort - ed Where have I been I say to my-self

44

Moth-er wind-ing as she does a-round the ax - is How far back through me-mo-ry does me-mo-ry ex-tend

4

47

A gap in know-ledge be - fore all peo ple\_ tell

51

his-tor-i-cal past the his-tor-i-cal truth a

55

par - lance spo-ken by stran - gers to in - ter - pre - ters

Seattle, 1999