

Ellen Ruth Harrison

ALL ONE CAN IMAGINE

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for mezzo-soprano and violin

Sefiros *
Bone-frame *
Shade threaded thru shade
So I beat this song
All the threads of my roads
Stones blossom *

Texts by Jakob Stein



This artist was awarded an Individual Excellence Award for 2014.

I wish to thank Jakob Stein for giving me permission to set these evocative poems. Their striking imagery resonates deeply with me. Although the music has a mournful quality to it, as does much of my work, it is tinged with longing as well. And with longing comes hope for "all one can imagine."

My thanks also go to Don Bogen, Poetry Editor of *The Cincinnati Review*, for commissioning three of these songs (*) and for inviting me to be part of the journal's poetry and music project.

Duration: circa 13 minutes
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Sefiros

In every room one
tree the same tree

in every abandoned chamber of names

charred limbs & leaves read
by black flame

ash-scrolls of the cinder tree

ash-fruit sustains me

Shade threaded thru shade

rings hooked thru rings in a ring
made of rings

concealed in the concealed

in the bone-frame the death-tree

mobile immobile, above
& below, the hollow of death

on her throne

I saw her figure cast on the Wall

widow queen turning
away from my turning away

All the threads of my roads
tied to one knot
cinder of light

impossible impassable

Bone-frame

my tree of death

& the knowledge of death
as yet untasted

but bone-known & written in skeletal verse

till all roll down the tunnel-lines
of scrolls

to final Jerusalem

So I beat this song

against stone walls or doors that open
on nothing

to wall after wall till all singing is done

Stones blossom

slow blooming of stone in stone-rain
across the sand garden

of all our long wandering

after such error even
the desert a river of riches

all one can imagine

until the black plume
the bottomless chasm

the blazing gate

All One Can Imagine

Sefiros

in memory of Cathryn Long

Jakob Stein

Ellen Ruth Harrison (2014)

♩ = 63

p
In e - very room one

p dolce

5
mp
tree the same tree

mp *mp*

11
mp *mf*
In e - very room one tree the same tree

mp

16 *mp* **Poco più mosso**

in e-very a - ban-doned cham - ber of

A tempo

20 *f* *mf*

names charred limbs & leaves read by black flame

26 *mp*

ash - scrolls of the cin- der tree ash- fruit sus - tains me

32 *mf*

mp *p*

Bone-frame

♩. = 96

f

Bone - frame

p *f* *mp*

7 *mp* *sub.f* *p*

f

13 *mp*

my tree of death

sub.f *f* *sub.p* *mf*

The musical score is written for two staves. The first system (measures 1-6) features a treble clef with a 6/8 time signature, changing to 4/8, then 6/8, 9/8, and 4/8. The melody is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The piano accompaniment starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, then moves to forte (*f*), and finally mezzo-forte (*mp*). The second system (measures 7-12) continues the piano accompaniment with dynamics of mezzo-forte (*mp*), *sub.f*, and piano (*p*). The melody in the second system is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The third system (measures 13-18) begins with a tempo change to ♩. = 76. The melody is marked mezzo-forte (*mp*) and includes the lyrics 'my tree of death'. The piano accompaniment features dynamics of *sub.f*, forte (*f*), *sub.p*, and mezzo-forte (*mf*), with triplets indicated by '3' and a slur.

21 *mf*

& the know-ledge of death as yet un - tast - ed

p mp p mp

25 $\text{♩} = 96$ $\text{♩} = 76$ *f*

but

f

30

bone-known & writ - ten in ske-le-tal verse

mp mf

37 **poco rit.** **Tempo I** $\text{♩} = 96$

mp mf

41

45 $\text{♩} = 76$ *mp*

till all roll down the tun-nel-lines of

49 *mf*

scrolls

52 *mp*

to fi-nal Je-ru-sa-lem

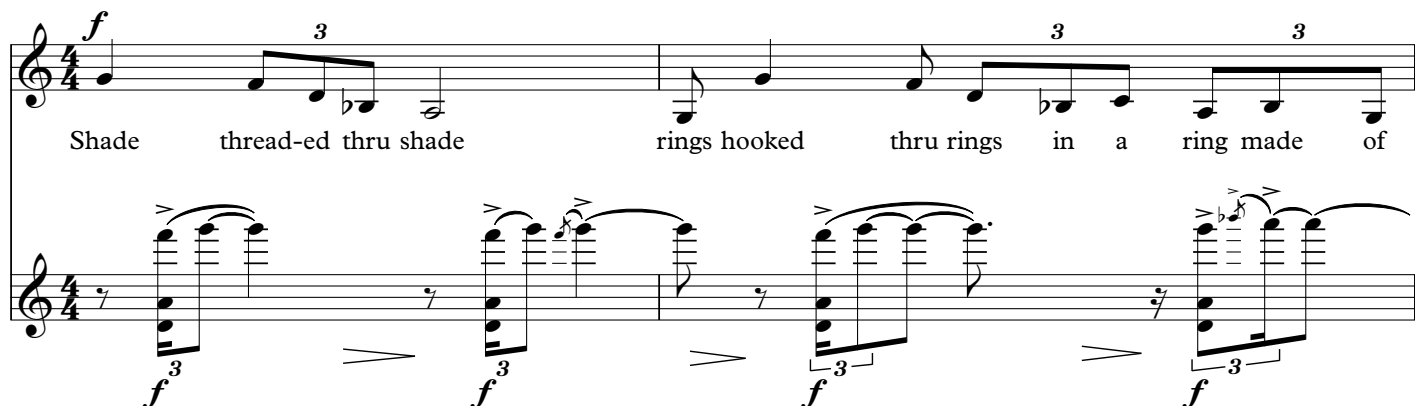
56 *f*

f

Shade threaded thru shade

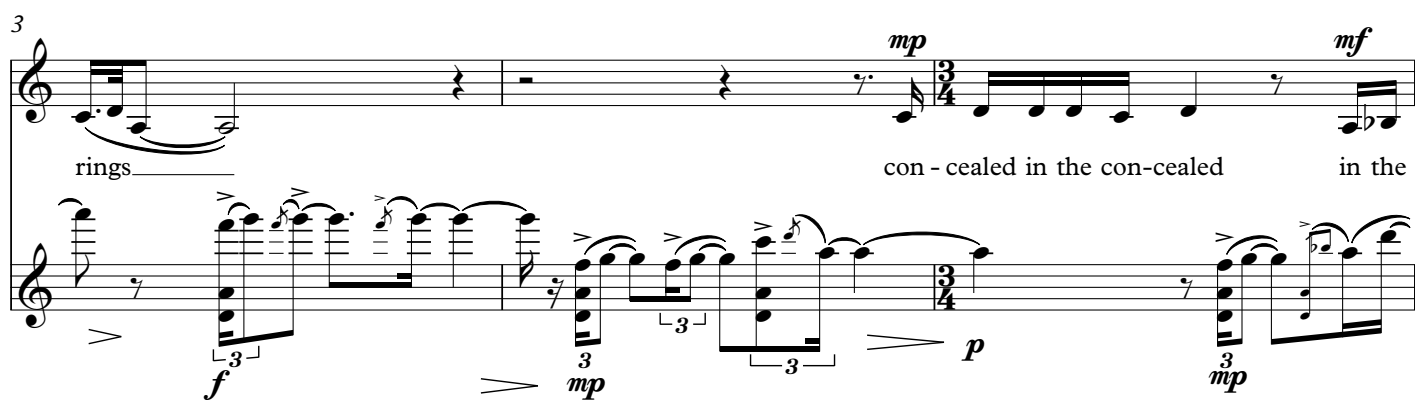
♩ = 66

f 3 Shade thread-ed thru shade rings hooked thru rings in a ring made of



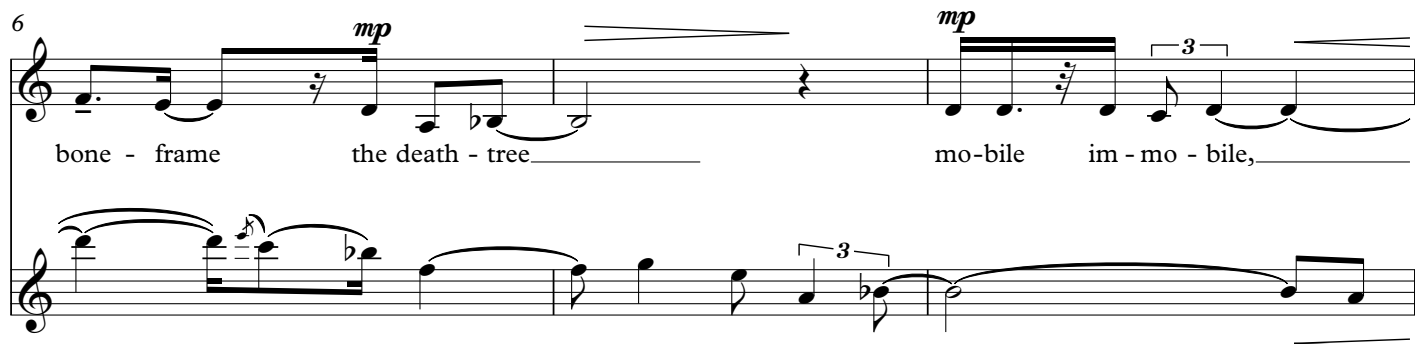
3 rings con - cealed in the con - cealed in the

mp *mf*



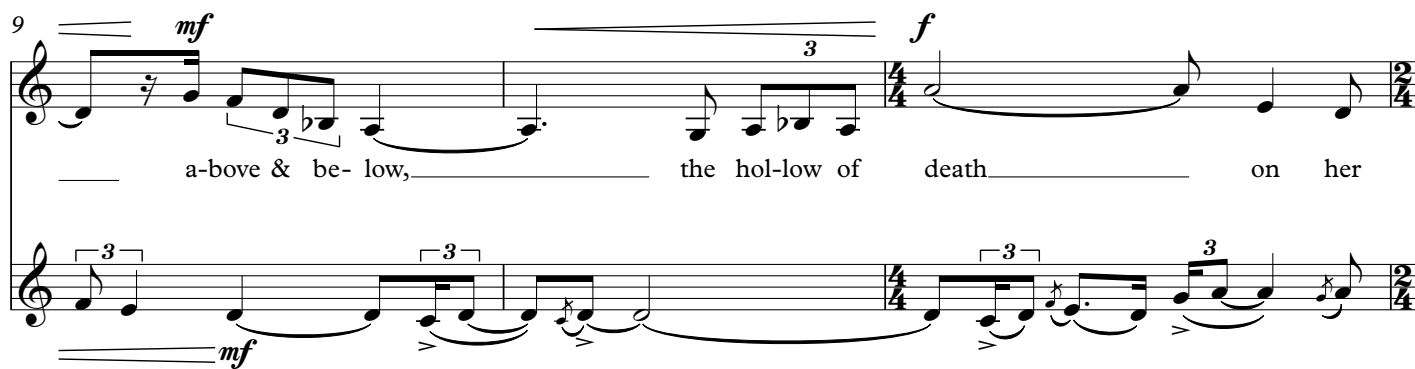
6 bone - frame the death - tree mo - bile im - mo - bile,

mp



9 a - bove & be - low, the hol - low of death on her

mf *f*



8

12

throne I saw her fig-ure cast on the Wall

16

$\text{♩} = 56$

20

wid - ow queen turn-ing a - way

sul tasto

23

from my turn - ing a - way

25

wid - ow queen turn - ing a - way

27

turn - ing

29

p

wid - ow

turn - ing a - way

ppppp

31

turn - i

33

ng

35

So I beat this song

$\text{♩} = 72$

mp

Meno mosso $\text{♩} = 66$

7

mp

So I beat this song _____ So I beat this song

mf *p*

12

mf *mp*

So I beat this song _____ So I beat this song

mf *mp*

16

mf *mp*

I beat this song a-against stone walls _____ So I beat this song _____

mf *mp* *mf*

21

mf *mf*

26

I beat a-against stone walls or doors that o-pen on noth ing

f *mf*

30

So I beat this song

So I beat this song

mp *f* *sub. p*

35

to wall af-ter wall till all sing-ing is done

f *mf* *f*

39

So I beat this song

mp *p* *mp*

All the threads of my roads

$\text{♩} = 76$

f

All the threads of my roads

f *mp* *mf*

6

All the threads tied to one knot

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

11

tied to one knot

mf *mp* *p*

on

6 6 6

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 1-5) features a vocal line starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a piano accompaniment that begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a mezzo-piano (*mp*) section. The second system (measures 6-10) continues the vocal line with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and the piano accompaniment with dynamics of mezzo-forte (*mf*), piano (*p*), mezzo-forte (*mf*), and piano (*p*). The third system (measures 11-15) shows the vocal line with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and the piano accompaniment with dynamics of mezzo-forte (*mf*), mezzo-piano (*mp*), and piano (*p*). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and triplets.

15 *mf* *f* *mf* 3

tied tied tied to one knot cin-der of

mf *mf* *p* *mf* *mf*

20 *f* *mp*

light on

mf *mp*

23 *p*

im - pos-si-ble im

pp *pp*

27 *pp*

poss i-ble im-pos-si-ble im-pass-a-ble

col legno battuto
fingernail *gliss.*

pp

Stones blossom

poco rit. . . . A tempo

♩ = 54

mf

Stones — blos — som — slow

ord.
p dolce

5

bloom-ing of stone in stone - rain

ord.

7

a-cross the sand gar-den a-cross the gar den the sand gar den

II *mp*

9 *mp* *mf*
 of all our long wan - - - der-ing

13 *mf* *mf*
 wan - der-ing af ter such er - ror e-ven the de- sert

16 *mp* *p* *sub mf*
 a ri - - - - - ver of

18 *f* *p* *p* *pp* *mp* *p* *mp*
 rich - es all

21 *f* *p*
 — one can i-ma - gine un-til the black plume

mf *p*

26 *mp*
 — the bot-tom-less cha-sm the black plume—

mp *mp*

31 *p* *f*
 the bot-tom-less the blaz-ing gate—

mp

34 *mf* *p*