

Grasping for Light

for 18 solo strings

JESSICA MEYER

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5'30"

9 violins
4 violas
3 cellos
2 basses

This short string orchestra work for A Far Cry is based on Whistler's "Nocturne, Blue and Silver: Battersea Reach" that is found in the Yellow Room of the Gardner Museum.

After the death of her only child, Ms. Gardner fell into a debilitating depression, for which her doctor eventually prescribed travel and new experiences. It was her emergence from this tragic experience and her subsequent travels around the world that rekindled her passion for art and kickstarted her mission for collecting it.

This piece, inspired by the painting, serves as a metaphor for how Isabella was able to move through the stagnant mist of her mental state towards the light of who she was supposed to be.

Many, many thanks to George Steel of the Gardner Museum, Jae Cosmos Lee, and the amazing musicians of A Far Cry for the opportunity.

Grasping for Light

Commissioned by the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum for A Far Cry

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Distraught

♩ = 50 (pulse always stays the same)

In Shock

tutti non. vib

tutti glissandi are always for the entire duration of the note

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with 19 staves. The top section consists of nine Violin staves (Violin 1-9). The middle section consists of four Viola staves (Viola 1-4). The bottom section consists of three Violoncello staves (Violoncello 1-3) and two Contrabass staves (Contrabass 1-2). The score begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 50. The first section is marked 'Distraught' and the second 'In Shock'. The Viola 1 part features a melodic line with dynamic markings of *mf* and *p*, and includes performance instructions for 'molto rit...' and 'a tempo'. The Violin 7-9 parts feature glissandi markings and a *p* dynamic. The Violoncello and Contrabass parts feature pizzicato markings and a *ff* dynamic. A box in the upper right corner states: 'tutti glissandi are always for the entire duration of the note'. A box in the lower right corner states: 'hold next note as long as you can until pizz.'. A large watermark 'FOR PERUSAL ONLY' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

tutti:
n.vib →
molto vib.

entrance does not
need to be exact,
violins come in as
soon as you can
during cello
entrance.

tutti non vib.

All play random accents
during second half of
measure as you crescendo
(while also adding vib.)
Should explode in intensity
at the end of the measure.

Sobbing, Klezmer-like

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. It features nine staves for Violins (Vln. 1-9), four staves for Violas (Vla. 1-4), three staves for Cellos (Vc. 1-3), and two staves for Contrabasses (Cb. 1-2). The score is divided into measures, with various dynamic markings such as *pp*, *ff*, *mf*, *fp*, and *p*. Performance instructions include *tutti*, *tutti non vib.*, and *random pulsations in the sound vln 6-9*. Specific notes are marked with *gliss.* and *pizz.*. A large watermark 'PERFORMER' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

This musical score page contains the following parts and markings:

- Violins 1-9:** Violins 1-5 have melodic lines with trills, triplets, and glissandos. Violins 6-9 play sustained notes with glissandos.
- Violas 1-4:** Violas 1-4 have melodic lines with trills, triplets, and glissandos.
- Cellos and Double Basses:** Cellos (Vc. 1-3) play sustained notes with dynamic changes from *p* to *f* to *p*. Double Basses (Cb. 1-2) play a pizzicato line with a triplet.
- Annotations:** "slur in grace notes but not the 64ths" (Violin 1), "Take as many bows as you need" (Violin 1), "vlns. & vias non vib" (Violins 1-9).
- Dynamic Markings:** *mf*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *f*, *ff*.
- Performance Techniques:** *gliss.*, *tr*, *pizz.*, *ff*.

Searching

tutti: inhale together tutti: exhale together always trill to natural note // tutti ord. vib

27

Vln. 1-9: *tr* (trills), *pp*, *U.H.* (ultra-high), *pp*, *pp*

Vln. 6-9: *vln 6-9 random pulsations in the sound*

Vla. 1-4: *bring out your note changes*, *p*, *pp*

Vc. 1: *sobbing, yet resigned*, *mp*, *bring out your note changes*, *p*

Cb. 1-2: *non vib*, *p (but phat)*, *pp*

This musical score page contains measures 38 through 41 for a string and woodwind ensemble. The instruments are arranged as follows:

- Vln. 1-8:** Violins I through VIII. Vln. 1 starts with a triplet and *p espress.* Vln. 2 has a tremolo and triplet. Vln. 3 has a triplet and *p espress.* Vln. 4 has a tremolo and triplet. Vln. 5 has a tremolo and triplet. Vln. 6 has a tremolo and triplet. Vln. 7 has a triplet and *pp*. Vln. 8 has a triplet and *pp*.
- Vln. 9:** Violin III, starting with a triplet and *pp*.
- Vla. 1-4:** Violas I through IV. Vla. 1 and 2 have *pp* and *sing out* markings. Vla. 3 and 4 have long sustained notes.
- Vc. 1-3:** Violoncellos I through III. Vc. 1 and 2 have *sing out with violas* markings. Vc. 3 has long sustained notes.
- Cb. 1-2:** Contrabasses I and II, with long sustained notes.

Measure 38 includes a rehearsal mark. Measure 41 features a large fermata over the final notes of the strings and woodwinds.

42

Vln. 1 *mf*

Vln. 2 *mf*

Vln. 3 U.H. *mf*

Vln. 4 *p* *mf*

Vln. 5 *mf*

Vln. 6 *mf*

Vln. 7 *mf*

Vln. 8 *mf*

Vln. 9 *mf* *p*

Vla. 1 *f*

Vla. 2 *mf*

Vla. 3 *mf*

Vla. 4 *mf*

Vc. 1 *f* *sing out*

Vc. 2 *mf*

Vc. 3 *mf*

Cb. 1 *mf*

Cb. 2 *mf*

U.H. *sing out*

Performance materials must be purchased via www.jessicameyermusic.com

This musical score page contains measures 45 through 48 for a string and woodwind ensemble. The instruments are arranged as follows:

- Vln. 1-5:** Violins. Vln. 1 and 2 play a melodic line with *pp* dynamics. Vln. 3 plays a rhythmic accompaniment with *pp* dynamics. Vln. 4 plays a triplet accompaniment with *pp* dynamics. Vln. 5 is silent.
- Vln. 6-9:** Violas. Vln. 6 has a *p* dynamic and a *sing out* instruction. Vln. 7 has a *pp* dynamic. Vln. 8 has a *pp* dynamic. Vln. 9 has a *pp* dynamic and a *sing out* instruction.
- Vla. 1-4:** Violas. Vla. 1 has a *p* dynamic and a *sing out* instruction. Vla. 2 has a *p* dynamic and a *sing out* instruction. Vla. 3 has a *pp* dynamic. Vla. 4 has a *pp* dynamic.
- Vc. 1-3:** Cellos. Vc. 1 has a *pp* dynamic. Vc. 2 has a *pp* dynamic. Vc. 3 has a *pp* dynamic.
- Cb. 1-2:** Contrabasses. Cb. 1 has a *p* dynamic. Cb. 2 has a *p* dynamic and plays a sixteenth-note accompaniment with *p* dynamics.

The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (*pp*, *p*), articulation (*sing out*), and rhythmic patterns (triplets and sixteenth notes). A large watermark is present across the page.

Gaining Momentum

tutti vln: do not slur-in grace notes

The musical score is arranged in 12 staves. The first nine staves are for Violins (Vln. 1-9), the next four for Violas (Vla. 1-4), and the last three for Cellos and Double Basses (Vc. 1-3, Cb. 1-2). The score is divided into three measures. The first measure starts at measure 49. Dynamics are marked as *mp* (mezzo-piano) throughout. The Violin parts feature complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. The Viola parts have more melodic lines with slurs. The Cello and Double Bass parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A large watermark 'PERFORMER' is overlaid diagonally across the page, and a smaller watermark 'Performance materials must be purchased via www.jessicameyermusic.com' is also present.

This page of a musical score contains measures 52 through 61. It features 18 staves, including Violins 1-9, Violas 1-4, Violas 1-3, Cellos 1-3, and Contrabasses 1-2. The score is written in a common time signature and includes various musical notations such as triplets, sixteenth-note patterns, and dynamic markings. A large, semi-transparent watermark is overlaid diagonally across the page, reading 'FOR PERSUASION performance materials must be purchased via www.jessicameyermusic.com'. The page number '11' is located in the top right corner.

detache when not marked slurred

This page of a musical score contains measures 54 through 63. It features 18 staves for string instruments (Violins 1-9, Violas 1-4, and Cellos/Double Basses 1-2) and 2 staves for woodwinds (Clarinets 1 and 2). The string parts are primarily composed of sixteenth-note patterns, often in triplet groupings, with some sixteenth-note runs. The woodwind parts consist of eighth-note patterns. Performance markings include slurs, accents, and dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*. A large, semi-transparent watermark reading "PERFORMER" is overlaid diagonally across the page. A smaller watermark, "Performance materials must be purchased via www.jessicameyermusic.com", is also visible.

55

molto rit.....

Vln. 1 *ff*

Vln. 2 *ff*

Vln. 3 *ff*

Vln. 4 *ff*

Vln. 5 *ff*

Vln. 6 *ff*

Vln. 7 *ff*

Vln. 8 *ff*

Vln. 9 *ff*

Vla. 1 *ff*

Vla. 2 *ff*

Vla. 3 *ff*

Vla. 4 *ff*

Vc. 1 *ff*

Vc. 2 *ff*

Vc. 3 *ff*

Cb. 1 *fff*

Cb. 2 *fff*

The musical score consists of 15 staves. The first nine staves are for violins (Vln. 1-9), the next four for violas (Vla. 1-4), and the last two for cellos and double basses (Vc. 1-3, Cb. 1-2). The score begins at measure 55. The first section (measures 55-59) features complex rhythmic patterns with many triplets and sixteenth notes. The second section (measures 60-64) is marked *molto rit.* and features a *ff* dynamic. The woodwinds (Vc. 1-3) play sustained notes with tremolos in the first section. The cellos and double basses (Cb. 1-2) play a steady eighth-note pattern in the first section and a more complex pattern in the second section.

Overjoyed

a tempo

This musical score is for the piece "Overjoyed" in a major key, marked "a tempo". It is a full orchestral score with the following parts:

- Vln. 1-9:** Violins I through Violins IX. The first five parts (Vln. 1-5) are in treble clef, while Vln. 6-9 are in bass clef. They feature complex rhythmic patterns with frequent triplets and sixteenth-note runs.
- Vla. 1-4:** Violas I through IV. Parts 1 and 2 are in bass clef, while parts 3 and 4 are in alto clef. They play a steady accompaniment with some triplet figures.
- Vc. 1-3:** Violoncellos I, II, and III. All are in bass clef, providing a rhythmic foundation with sixteenth-note patterns and triplets.
- Cb. 1-2:** Contrabasses I and II. Both are in bass clef, playing a simple, rhythmic accompaniment.

The score includes various performance markings such as *fff* (fortissimo), *tr* (trills), and *gliss.* (glissando). It also features numerous triplet and sixteenth-note groupings throughout the piece. The page number "14" is located at the top left, and the rehearsal mark "57" is at the beginning of the first violin part.

