

Storm Warning

For Piano and Voice

Music: Alex van den Broek

Text: Riemke Ensing

2014

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1. Kaipara
2. Backwater Spells

Duration: approx. 8mins

Notes for the performers

Kaipara is a very vertical piece, but it should be played with some expression. The bell-like section starting at bar 46 should be as resonant as possible. Wait until the piano decays to pianissimo before continuing at bar 55

Backwater Spells should be played very freely. Follow the singer in a general way whilst maintaining the sense of phrasing. Do not try and 'line up' and attack any notes together. The phrasing is very important in the piece, observe the dashed slur markings. Follow the pedal markings carefully, they are very specific and often the piano part should be very 'dry' to contrast with the richer sustained moments.

Programme Notes

As a composer I enjoy working with text and in particular the poetry of Riemke Ensing, whose work I have set before. Riemke and I have a shared experience and identity in that we are both Dutch born New Zealanders and I find that this resonates throughout her writing. In particular I found the text of this collection of poetry beautiful, striking, and highly evocative of the New Zealand landscape. Thematically I responded to the ideas of land, time and identity which have long held appeal for me.

When reading the text it seemed very resonant and with rhythms, movement and colour that would naturally adapt and respond to being set to music. My aim in setting the text was not to undo its beauty and strength by merely swamping it with musical ideas and language. Rather I hope I have imbued the words with the added colour and emotional impact that music can contribute.

These two poems are taken from the thirteen poems that form the collection entitled *Storm Warning – After McCahon*.

Alex van den Broek (2014)

Kaipara:

♩ = 84
mp

Voice

Piano

There's this great swee-ping lone - li-ness. fea- thers

8

and bone and wind swept de - so - la - tion.

13

The sea rest - less, al-ways on the move but age - less

17

in jour-neys and me-ta-phor. Birds al-so crea-tures

22 *f* *mp* *p*

of a - rri - val, the ma-nu-hi - ri - wai-ting on the rock

27

for rit-u-al and call. In

33

the score of bro-ken surf swept in on mi-ra - cles

40 *f* *p*

through all this pa ssion of sur-vi - val, a raft of vio - let shells

46

spoken: 'Janthina Janthina'

f

Ped.

52

p

59 **Poco rit.**

or - a - cle in praise of sanc-tu-a-ry.

p

Backwater Spells:

Freely (♩ = 88 approx)

Voice

Piano

p *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* *p*

p *3*

At Mu-ri - wai_ we

Ped.

4

walk with friends and find a whale_ bone bur-ied in the sand.

mp *p* *pp*

3

Ped.

7

We ex - ca - vate_

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

3

Ped.

10

and lie curled in the great bel - ly

mp *p*

3 *3* *3* *3*

Ped.

2 12

of earth sur - roun - ded

mp *pp*

Ped. Ped.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 12 to 14. The vocal line starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes F#4 and E4. There is a whole rest in measure 13, and then quarter notes D4, C4, and B3 in measure 14. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics range from mezzo-piano (*mp*) to pianissimo (*pp*). Pedal points are indicated with 'Ped.' and a triangle symbol.

15

by wa - ter and the

p *p* *mf* *p*

Ped.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 15 to 17. The vocal line has a whole rest in measure 15, followed by quarter notes G4, F#4, and E4 in measure 16, and a half note D4 in measure 17. The piano accompaniment continues with intricate patterns. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and mezzo-forte (*mf*). A pedal point is marked at the end of the system.

18

al - ways cir - cle of be - ing.

p *p* *p*

Ped. Ped.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 18 to 20. The vocal line begins with a triplet of quarter notes G4, F#4, and E4 in measure 18, followed by quarter notes D4, C4, and B3 in measure 19, and a half note A3 in measure 20. The piano accompaniment features a triplet in measure 18. Dynamics are consistently piano (*p*). Pedal points are indicated at the end of measures 18 and 20.

21

f

Ped. Ped.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 21 to 23. The piano accompaniment is the primary focus, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in measure 21 and a half note G4 in measure 22. Dynamics include forte (*f*). Pedal points are marked at the end of measures 21 and 23.

24

Mo-by Dick is sigh - ted on a per-fect day

p *mp*

Ped.

27

and the curved sky-line vaults with the

mp *mp*

Ped.

29

soar of stone sing - ing.

p *mp* *p* *mp*

Ped.

33

f *mp* *mp*

Ped.

36 *mf*

From be-hind a great rock face of stone braced in - to the

mp *mf* *mp*

Ped.

40

sky, the god-dess of flutes shapes the

mp

Ped.

43

wind through bones of birds and guards the

p *mf* *mp* *f*

Ped.

45

cave hol-ding the sun in its pro - mise.

p *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

mp *p*

Ped.

49

Walls ig- nite and flame in a last splen - dour of

mp *mf* *p*

53

Molto rit.

light. deep from with-in

mp *p*

59

you think you hear great fish cal - ling.

p *decresc.* *ppp*