



Breath

Tell me how
I may know and may
say now my way

w up w down

her sisters sing sweetly, weeping for their
emerging from nothing, were sister

medium and the well that took



degree on

Songs of Medusa, no. 8 - the collective mourning and releasing of pain, sorrow, and grief through outward expression of the psyche as a whole.

This piece focuses on the meditation of pain and release of this pain, and how our cries are held within our bodies. The point of the piece isn't musical accuracy, beauty, or a final performance but in the acknowledgement and space held for our shared lived experiences from which we have reached this point, and that which has brought us sorrow both internally and externally. My challenge to all my performers of my pieces is to see the wounded and broken parts of this woman, Medusa, one of the first WOC who was a rape survivor and who was brutally punished all of her life for this by men searching to hunt her down and kill her for the protection provided to her by Athena to defend herself. She is the source of the heliconian fountain of poetry, and a great mother of all living things--her blood is the source of the fountain, of pegasus and her other children, of the snakes of Africa. Pay homage to her, and yourselves, in all of your beautiful brokenness that only she can welcome. Give her your pain, grief, sorrow, and remorse for all things that were, came to be, and never could be, and let the song spin these stories into something more.

In the graphic score, there are three circles notated within a larger circle, the drone. All life in this piece comes to and from the drone, and it is the groundwork for the other cells to occur. In moments of insecurity or sadness, return to the drone and let the sound wash over you before continuing. From the drone enters breath, the exploration of our respiration and means of existence. Inspiration and Exhalation become audible parts of the soundscape, as they are part of our life cycle. From there, continue on to the secondary circle with three staves for the weeping motifs, the cells represent the weeping of Medusa's sisters Stheno and Euryale for the loss of all that was and would be. Once all lines of this circle have been established, a few members may slowly transition into the final cell "narrative" which includes the text of lifeless Medusa's last words escaping from her severed head. Once the entirety of the narrative has been sung, return to the sisters' song, to breath exploration, and then to the drone before fading into nothingness. Hold space for the energy created even after silence has occurred.

Songs of Medusa, No. 8

Cell notation reference for practice/performance as needed

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"Oh/ah" a weeping sound, vowels should not match across ensemble/group,
allow vowel to shift naturally through pitch changes
Call upon your own experiences of pain, let them become part of the sound.

Musical notation for measure 1, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are primarily eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns, connected by a single long-lined slur. The music consists of two staves of five lines each.

2

Musical notation for measure 2, continuing from measure 1. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns, connected by a single long-lined slur. The music consists of two staves of five lines each.

3

microtonal slide, starting from nothing and leaning into the dissonance;
resolving and devolving once again to pain then nothing

Musical notation for measure 3, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns, connected by a single long-lined slur. The music consists of two staves of five lines each.

4

Musical notation for measure 4, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns, connected by a single long-lined slur. Below the staff, lyrics are written: "my bo - - - dy smells of death". To the right, the text "'oh/oo'" is shown. The music consists of two staves of five lines each.

5

Musical notation for measure 5, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns, connected by a single long-lined slur. Below the staff, lyrics are written: "per haps it is because I died long ago". To the right, the text "'oh/oo'" is shown. The music consists of two staves of five lines each.

7

Musical notation for measure 7, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns, connected by a single long-lined slur. Below the staff, lyrics are written: "per - haps it is be - cause I have not died - soon e - nough - - -". The music consists of two staves of five lines each.

8

Musical notation for measure 8, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are eighth notes with some sixteenth-note patterns, connected by a single long-lined slur. The music includes two breath markings: "30% breath" and "50% breath". Below the staff, lyrics are written: "the smell of corp-ses li - gers in my hair and my mouth grows still grows cold,". The music consists of two staves of five lines each.

A musical score for voice and piano. The vocal line is written in soprano clef on five-line staves. The piano accompaniment consists of single notes and chords. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. Measure 9: "fro - - - - zen" followed by a piano note. Measure 10: "os" followed by "pou - ring forth a mai - sma strong e - nough". Measure 11: "that not e - ven the scent of flo - wers can hide". Measure 12: "my lips grow pale - - cheeks lose their co - - lor". Measure 13: "and my eyes? well, those have been dead for much long - er - - -". The score includes dynamic markings like "95% breath, the softest death rattle".