

Hongwei Cai

Dal niente, al niente

a song set to Shelley's Ozymandias
for soprano, flute, and harp
(2021)

"Even with the prospect of achieving supreme power in life, one becomes nothing more than a heap of dust after death."

—Hongwei Cai 2021

The piece received its first performance by The Ensemble Dal Niente at University of Iowa, on April. 18th, 2021.

Duration: ca. 9 min

Ozymandias

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert ... Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings,
Look on my Works ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.'—

Performance Notes

Flute:

Re/Re[#] trill: mixture of trills with extraneous sounds. Overlap a continuous and dense trill of D and D[#], with fingers extended and light (right hand), taking care that the two movements of each key alternate well. It is a bubbling of extreme fluidity, due to a speed further accelerated by the double mechanism of the trill.

t.t. = timbral trill

Harp:

Étouffées: Étouffées are executed with the thumb while the palm muffles the notes vibrating below.

Falling Hail: The nails of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th fingers slide along the strings.

Metallic Sounds: This effect requires the harpist to keep their foot in a very precise position between pedal slots.

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Flute

Re-Re#

Re-Re#

Re-Re#

pp

pp

pp

Soprano

Harp

p

E, F#, G, A \flat
D#, C, B

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10

Fl. *mp* *mf* *p* *f*

S.

Hp. *p* *mp* *pp* *mp* *f* *mp*

t.t.

bisbigliando

14

Fl. *p* *pp*

S. *p*

Hp. *mp* *p*

Falling Hail (slow to fast)

l.v.

Étouffées

19

Fl. *p*

S. *p*

Hp. *p*

tra - vel - ler I met a tra - vel - ler from an an - tique land,

23

Fl. *mp* *pp* *p*

S. *p*
I met a

Hp.

26

Fl. *mp*

S. *mp* *pp*
tra - vel - ler from an an - tique land,

Hp.

29

Fl. *pp* *mf* *p* *mf*

S. *p*
from

Hp.

32

Fl.

mp

3

tr

3

tr

3

3

5

S.

mp

an an-tique land, Who Said:

Hp.

pp *f* *p* *f.v.*

F \sharp D \sharp C \sharp B \flat

36

Fl.

p

pp

S.

p

'Two

Hp.

p

39

Fl.

mp

vast and trunk - - less legs of

Hp.

41

Fl. *mf* *p* *tr*

S. stone Stand in the

Hp.

43

Fl. *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *flz.*

S. de - sert...

Hp.

45

Fl. *p* *mp* *mf* *tr*

S. *mp* Near them, on the sand,

Hp.

B \flat C \sharp

47 (tr) *p* *mf*

Fl.

S. (ah)

Hp.

A^b F[#] D^b 6

49 *mf* *f* 5 *f*

Fl.

S. *f* Half sunk a shat - tered vis - age lies, *non arpio.*

Hp. *f* *p* *f*

51 *mf* 6 *f* *mp* *mf*

Fl.

S. *ff* whose frown, And wrin - kled lip, and sneer (ah) *non arpio.*

Hp. *f* *p* *f* *mp* 6

F^b A^b B^b

53

Fl.

S.

Hp.

mp

sneer of cold com-

6 6 F^b 6 A[#]

Più mosso

56

Fl.

S.

Hp.

pp *p* *mp* *p*

mand,

(ord.) *p.d.l.t.*

mf

6 6 6 6

A^b F^b D^b

58

Fl.

S.

Hp.

timbral trill ad libitum

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

ord. *p.d.l.t.* ord. *p.d.l.t.*

/mf 6 6 6 6 */mf* 6 6 6 6

G[#] A^b B^b G^b D[#]

60

Fl.

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

S.

p

Tell

ord. *p.d.l.t.*

Hp.

mf 6 6 6 6 *p* 6 6 6 6

62

Fl.

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

S.

that its sculp - - ter

3

Hp.

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

(timbral trill)

64

Fl.

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

S.

mf

well those pas - - sions

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

Hp.

66

Fl.

p mp mf mp pp p mp p

S.

mp read *p* read

Hp.

6 6 6 6

p

68

Fl.

pp p mp p pp p mp p

S.

mp Which yet *p* sur - vive,

Hp.

6 5 5 5

mp

70

Fl.

S.

p Stamped on these

Hp.

mf 6 6 6 6

p 6 6 6 6

A[♯]

72

Fl.

S.

Hp.

life - - - less things, _____

pp

74

Fl.

S.

Hp.

Stamped on these life - - - less _____

mp *pp*

mp

B#

76

Fl.

S.

Hp.

things, _____ things, _____

pp *mp* *pp*

mf

E^b C# F^b

78

Fl.

S.

Hp.

80

Fl.

S.

Hp.

Lively

82

Fl.

S.

Hp.

The hand that

83

Fl.

p *mp*

S.

mocked them,

Hp.

G#

84

Fl.

p

S.

mf

and the heart that

Hp.

mp

F# Bb

85

Fl.

mf

S.

f non diminuendo

fed;

Hp.

mf

86

Fl. *mp*

S.

Hp. *F[♯]*

Meno mosso

87

Fl. *pp*

S. *p*
And on the ped-es-tal, these words

Hp. *ppp*
bisbigliando
G[♯] B^b

97

Fl. *mp*

S. *ap - pear:*

Hp. *mf* *p*
A^b

94

Fl. *flz.* *mf* *mp*

Freely, magisterial
quasi parlando
mf

S. *3* *mf* *mp*

"My name is O - zy-man-di - as,

95

Fl. *flz.* *f* *mf*

S. *f*

king of kings,

96

Fl. *cresc.*

S. *3* *cresc.*

Look on my Works ye Might - y,

97

Fl.

S.

Hp.

ff

and de - spair!"

f

Gong effect

fff

A \flat
D \sharp

98

Fl.

S.

Hp.

fff

mp

ff

Esoteric sound

(G \flat) - # - \flat

99

Fl.

ff

S.

(optional falsetto)
pp sotto voce

Hp.

ff

Metallic Sounds
l.v.
fff

B \sharp

101

Fl.

Re-Re#

Re-Re#

Re-Re#

tongue ram

p

S.

p

No-thing be-side re - mains.

Hp.

pp

bisbigliando

thumb
mp

E \flat
C \sharp

105

Fl. *Re-Re#*

S. Round the de-cay Of that co-los-sal wreck, _____

Hp. *thumb mp* *pp* *p*

109

Fl. *Re-Re#*

S. bound-less and bare _____

Hp. *thumb mp*

112

Fl. *Re-Re#* *Re-Re#*

S. The lone and lev-el sands stretch far a-way.' stretch far a-

Hp. *pp* *ppp*

117

Fl. *pp* *p* *pp*

S. way far a - way far a -

Hp.

121

Fl.

S. way a - way

Hp.

123

Fl. *pp* *ppp*

S.

Hp.