

CRAIG CARNAHAN MUSIC
CCM607

Craig Carnahan



*Promises
and Interludes*

Mezzo-soprano, Guitar



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PROGRAM NOTE: *Promises and Interludes*

The texts chosen for this song cycle are four of the fourteen poems that comprise Thomas Meyer's *The Promise: A Grand But Lost Crown*. Their fragmentary and, at times, contradictory nature lend themselves perfectly to two distinct voices – in this case, mezzo-soprano and guitar – sometimes working independently of each other; sometimes working in tandem.

Each *Promise* is brimming with vivid imagery and contrasting emotions that range from seasoned self-confidence, to crippling self-doubt, to detached acceptance. These feelings often converge so abruptly that interludes are employed to provide an opportunity to, in Meyer's words: "take a deep breath." Ultimately though, these are poems that transcend human restraint to celebrate the most powerful human instinct: love.

—Craig Carnahan

Promises and Interludes

The Promise (5)

— When one dies, a Persian custom, doesn't matter
What your sex was

an angel
sent by the lord
to meet you in
the cool shadows of the meadows

young, ravishing, boy, girl —
doesn't matter —
your heart breaks

And you are in heaven. They say, that this angel
Is yourself seen in the still waters of your soul

Quiet pool
Narcissus knelt by

"You need no more than this," the gray willows whisper,
no more than this....

The Promise (6)

What more than this is there anyway? Echoes
Reflections,
Sunlight
bright cucumbers, ripe pears

The confident, sensual world where everything
Can be touched, in whose arms we are held
And what we behold is god.
Each hesitant step

trembling finger tears

There is not enough air.
The room's too warm.
I am sick.

Sick of love, sick of passion,
Sick of their conventions.

The Promise (13)

Let the wine breath. Yes.

The wine dark sea, I'm reminded
and would mention it, but don't.

Did you know grapes grow down to the shore

And tangle in the surf off

Hatteras? I haven't seen them, but've
been told...

I cannot take my eyes off you.

Where my heart was, a young hare has been trapped

Weak with the look of you
my tongue goes numb

I'd planned to say
Tell you that, or at least...

Take a deep breath

The Promise (14)

Take a deep breath

yes

it is

if then...

Let's bury our hearts

They won't

bruised with lust
sick of their conventions

no more than this...

When one dies — ...a Persian custom? doesn't matter

there

— *Thomas Meyer*

Promises and Interludes

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thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Thomas Meyer

Craig Carnahan (b. 1951)

The Promise (5): *When one dies*

Slowly, at will **Casual, somewhat detached** ♩ = 70

mp

Mezzo-Soprano

When ___ one ___ dies, _____

Guitar

mf *mp*

Mezzo

9 a ___ Per-sian cus - tom, _____ does - n't

Gtr.

9 *mp*

2

Mezzo

14

mf *f* *mf*

mat - ter, — does - n't mat - ter — What your sex was, What your sex was, — does - n't

Gtr.

14

mf *f* *mf*

sul pont. *nat.*

Mezzo

19

Warmly, more engaged

mp *mf*

mat - ter, — When — one — dies, — an —

Gtr.

19

mf

Mezzo

25

3

an - gel — sent by the lord — to meet you — in the cool shad-ows of the mead-ows

Gtr.

25

3

Mezzo

30 *f* *mf*

young, ——— rav-ish-ing, — boy, ——— girl — —

Gtr.

30 *sul pont.* *f* *mf* *nat.*

Mezzo

35 *mp* *mf* With more emotion

does-n't mat-ter — — your heart breaks — — and you ³are in heav-en. — —

Gtr.

35 *mp* *mf*

Mezzo

41 *mp*

They say, that this an-gel Is your-self — — seen

Gtr.

41 *mp*

6

Serene and reflective, tempo ad lib.

Mezzo

76

Gtr.

76

* no more than this...

Mezzo

85

Gtr.

85

no more than this... _____

ppp

ppp

* *Performance note:* The motives in each cell should be repeated multiple times at the discretion of the performers, getting gradually softer until the final notes. The voice and guitar should be treated as independent of each other, each choosing their own tempo, pacing and flow.

The Promise (6): *What more than this is there anyway?*

Relaxed, conversational ♩ = 84

Guitar

Solo:

mf

mp

Gtr.

mf

6

3

3

3

3

Gtr.

10

f

sul pont.

mp

3

3

3

Gtr.

15

nat. (let ring)

3

3

3

The musical score is written for guitar and guitar trill. It consists of four staves. The first staff is for the guitar, starting with a solo. The second staff is for guitar trill, starting at measure 6. The third staff is for guitar trill, starting at measure 10. The fourth staff is for guitar trill, starting at measure 15. The score includes various musical notations such as treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), time signature of 3/4, and dynamic markings like *mf* (mezzo-forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *f* (forte). It also features articulation marks like accents (>) and slurs, as well as performance instructions like 'Solo:', 'sul pont.', and 'nat. (let ring)'. The score is divided into measures by bar lines, with measure numbers 6, 10, and 15 indicated at the start of their respective staves. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fourth staff.

8

Mezzo

19 *mp* *mf*

What more than this is there an-y - way? Ech - oes Re - flec - tions,

Gtr.

19 *mf*

Mezzo: Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 19-23. Measure 19: 4/4, quarter rest, quarter note D, quarter note E, quarter note F#. Measure 20: 3/4, quarter note G, quarter note A, quarter note B. Measure 21: 3/4, quarter note C, quarter note D, quarter note E. Measure 22: 4/4, eighth notes G-A, eighth notes B-C, quarter note D, quarter note E. Measure 23: 4/4, quarter note F#, quarter note G, quarter note A, quarter note B. Lyrics: 'What more than this is there an-y - way? Ech - oes Re - flec - tions,'. Gtr.: Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 19-23. Measure 19: 4/4, low E note (3 lines down), quarter rest. Measure 20: 3/4, quarter rest. Measure 21: 3/4, quarter rest. Measure 22: 4/4, eighth notes G-A, eighth notes B-C, quarter note D, quarter note E. Measure 23: 4/4, eighth notes F#-G, eighth notes A-B, quarter note C, quarter note D. Dynamics: *mp* at start, *mf* at measure 22. Accents over notes in measures 22 and 23.

Mezzo

24 *mp*

Sun - light bright cu-cum - bers, ripe pears

Gtr.

24

Mezzo: Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 24-28. Measure 24: 4/4, quarter note D, quarter note E, quarter note F#, quarter note G. Measure 25: 3/4, quarter note A, quarter note B, quarter note C. Measure 26: 3/4, quarter note D, quarter note E, quarter note F#. Measure 27: 4/4, quarter rest, quarter note G, quarter note A, quarter note B. Measure 28: 4/4, quarter note C, quarter note D, quarter note E, quarter note F#. Lyrics: 'Sun - light bright cu-cum - bers, ripe pears'. Gtr.: Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 24-28. Measure 24: 4/4, low E note (3 lines down), quarter rest. Measure 25: 3/4, eighth notes G-A, eighth notes B-C, quarter note D. Measure 26: 3/4, quarter note E, quarter note F#, quarter note G. Measure 27: 4/4, eighth notes A-B, eighth notes C-D, quarter note E, quarter note F#. Measure 28: 4/4, eighth notes G-A, eighth notes B-C, quarter note D, quarter note E. Dynamics: *mp* at start, *mf* at measure 27. Accents over notes in measures 27 and 28.

Mezzo

29 *mf* *accel.*

What more than this is there an - y - way?

Gtr.

29 *accel.*

Mezzo: Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 29-33. Measure 29: 4/4, quarter rest, quarter note D, quarter note E, quarter note F#. Measure 30: 3/4, quarter rest, quarter note G, quarter note A. Measure 31: 3/4, quarter note B, quarter note C, quarter note D. Measure 32: 4/4, eighth notes E-F, eighth notes G-A, quarter note B, quarter note C. Measure 33: 4/4, quarter note D, quarter note E, quarter note F#, quarter note G. Lyrics: 'What more than this is there an - y - way?'. Gtr.: Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 29-33. Measure 29: 4/4, eighth notes G-A, eighth notes B-C, quarter note D, quarter note E. Measure 30: 3/4, eighth notes F#-G, eighth notes A-B, quarter note C. Measure 31: 3/4, quarter note D, quarter note E, quarter note F#. Measure 32: 4/4, eighth notes G-A, eighth notes B-C, quarter note D, quarter note E. Measure 33: 4/4, eighth notes F#-G, eighth notes A-B, quarter note C, quarter note D. Dynamics: *mf* at start, *accel.* at measure 32. Accents over notes in measures 32 and 33.

♩ = 88

Mezzo

34

Gtr.

34

mf

Mezzo

38

mf

Sun - - - light

ripe

Gtr.

38

Mezzo

42

pears

Gtr.

42

mp

Mezzo

61

trém - bling fin - ger — tears —

Gtr.

61

accel.

3

f

3

Mezzo

65

Quasi recitative, ad lib.

*

mf

mp

There is not e-nough air.

The room's too warm.

I am sick.

Gtr.

65

Attacca

mf

mp

* *Performance note:* These three measures should be treated as separate statements, with appropriate space between each one (at the discretion of the performers). The guitar flourishes are meant to be bold and theatrical; the mezzo-soprano determines the rhythms and dramatic approach to the musical material in each measure.

The Promise (13): *Let the wine breathe*

Freely, relaxed ♩ = c.. 69

Mezzo

*mf**

Let the wine breathe.

mf

Let the wine breath.

mf

Yes.

Yes. ____

Guitar

mf

* Performance note: As previously, the mezzo-soprano and the guitar should be treated independently of each other. The guitar maintains a constant tempo; the mezzo decides her own tempo and the amount of time between each musical motive.

Warmly and sustained ♩ = 92

Mezzo

mp

Let the wine breathe. ____

The wine dark

Gtr.

mp

sim.

15

Mezzo



sea, _____ I am re - mind - ed _____ and would.... and would men - tion it,

Gtr.

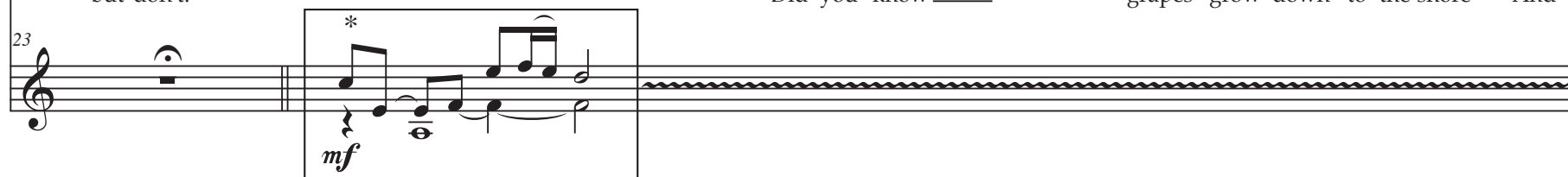


Mezzo



but don't. Did you know _____ grapes grow down to the shore And

Gtr.

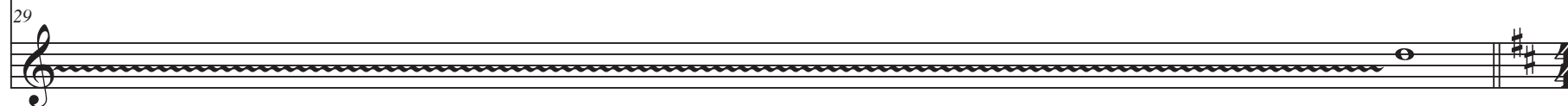


Mezzo



tan - gle _____ in the surf _____ off Hat - ter - as? I have - n't seen them, but I've been told... _____

Gtr.



17

Mezzo

49

mf

mp

Weak with the look of you _____ my tongue goes numb Weak with the

Gtr.

49

mf

Mezzo

54

Gradual ritard to end.

p 3

look of you _____ I'd planned to say... planned to say... Tell you that, or at least...

Gtr.

54

Mezzo

60

or at least Take a deep breath

Gtr.

60

p

The Promise (14): Take a deep breath

Relaxed and flowing

Solo:

Guitar

Gtr.

Gtr.

Gtr.

19

Mezzo

22 $\text{♩} = 70$ *mf*

Take a deep breath_____ Take a deep breath_____ yes_____ yes

Gtr.

22

f

Mezzo

28 *mf* *mp*

it is_____ if then..._____

Gtr.

28 *sul pont.* *mf* *nat.*

Mezzo

33 $\text{♩} = 88$ *mp*

Take a deep breath

Gtr.

33 *mp*

67

Mezzo

no more than this

67

Gtr.

mp *mf* *p*

73

Mezzo

$\text{♩} = 70$ *mp*

When one dies — a

73

Gtr.

mp

79

Mezzo

p

Per - sian cus - tom? does - n't mat - ter, —

79

Gtr.

p

The musical score is arranged in three systems, each with a Mezzo (voice) and Gtr. (guitar) part. The Mezzo part includes lyrics and dynamic markings. The Guitar part includes various musical notations like triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

System 1 (Measures 67-72):

- Mezzo: Measures 67-72. Lyrics: "no more than this". Dynamics: *mp*, *mf*, *p*.
- Gtr.: Measures 67-72. Dynamics: *mp*, *mf*, *p*.

System 2 (Measures 73-78):

- Mezzo: Measures 73-78. Lyrics: "When one dies — a". Dynamics: *mp*.
- Gtr.: Measures 73-78. Dynamics: *mp*.

System 3 (Measures 79-84):

- Mezzo: Measures 79-84. Lyrics: "Per - sian cus - tom? does - n't mat - ter, —". Dynamics: *p*.
- Gtr.: Measures 79-84. Dynamics: *p*.