Portraits of Immortal Love
A Concerto for Percussion & Orchestra

World Premiere, October 25th 2014
Dame Evelyn Glennie, Percussion
Tacoma Symphony Orchestra
Conducted by Sarah Ioannides

Composed by
SEAN O'BOYLE

Full Score

Duration 26:00

Instrumentation

Solo Percussion
Bass Drum, Chinese Bell Tree, Crotales, 3 Triangles,
Encore Chimes of Earth (wind chimes),
Marimba, Mark Tree, Piccolo Snare Drum,
Vibraphone, Shell wind chimes, Tubular Bells,
Waterphone.
Piccolo
1st Flute
2nd Flute
1st Oboe
2nd Oboe
Cor Anglais
1st Bb Clarinet
Bb Bass Clarinet
1st Bassoon
2nd Bassoon
1st & 3rd Horns
2nd & 4th Horns

1st Trumpet in C
2nd Trumpet in C
1st Trombone
2nd Trombone
Bass Trombone
Tuba
Timpani
Percussion
(Tambourine Triangle Bass Drum Finger Cymbals
Tam-tam Snare Drum Birdcall Cymbals Glockenspiel)
Mallet Percussion
(Glockenspiel Tubular Bells Triangle Bass Drum
Xylophone Tam-tam Cymbals)
Harp
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Double Basses
Sean O’Boyle

New York/Bethlehem based Australian composer, conductor & master orchestrator, Sean O’Boyle, has conducted recordings and concerts with many leading Australian and international orchestras, including the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Barrier Reef Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra, Queensland Pops Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Dortmund Konzert, Lexington Philharmonic, Auckland Philharmonia, Malaysian Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic and the BBC Concert Orchestra.

His compositions & orchestrations have been performed and or recorded by all the major Australian orchestras; European Orchestras include - Berlin Philharmonic, Orchestre Symphonique Divertimento, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra and North American Orchestras include - the Atlanta Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, Concord Chamber Orchestra, Edmonton Symphony and the Cincinnati Pops.

Sean has written for, conducted, directed and collaborated with many artists including; Dame Evelyn Glennie, Adam Lopez, James Morrison, The Whitlams, Tommy Emmanuel, Kate Ceberano, Yvonne Kenny, Teddy Tahu-Rhodes, Suzanne Kompass, David Hobson, Riley Lee, David Campbell, Jane Rutter, Gregory Moore and the electric string trio MASKE.

He has written and produced music for more than 100 CDs recorded in collaboration with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

He has twice received the coveted ABC Golden Manuscript Award for his work as a composer and his projects have received numerous ARIA (Australian GRAMMY) nominations & awards.

Sean has a keen interest in the music of indigenous Australians and in 2001 he collaborated with didgeridoo maestro, William Barton, in composing his Concerto for Didgeridoo & Orchestra. This concerto was ranked #32 in the ABC Classic FM “The Classic 100 Concertos” & #87 in ABC Classic 100 - 20th Century.

Sean is a master orchestrator and has contributed much to the concert platform, opera & ballet. As a Conductor, Sean has performed in concert halls as diverse as the iconic Sydney Opera House - Avery Fischer Hall (NYC) – Queens Hall (London) – Roy Thompson Hall (Toronto) and great concert spaces under the stars in Australia.

In 2014 Sean was appointed Chief Arranger & Composer in Residence of the Queensland Pops Orchestra. Sean and his wife Suzanne, have a home in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where they are Artists in Residence at the USA’s 6th oldest University, Moravian College, where he teaches composition, conducting, orchestration, film music and jazz clarinet.
Program Notes – Portraits of Immortal Love

My inspiration is that of the desperate hope of the world 100 years ago when Mothers, Fathers, Daughters, Sons, Wives, Husbands, Girlfriends, Boyfriends & Lovers waited for news of their special person and the love stories that have endured. I want to show the great power and aching beauty percussion can bring to our emotional state.

Many lovers were separated by the Great-War, when the only means of communication was the written word.

The concerto begins with a unison D in the strings and distant church bells calling. The first theme “Love’s first awakening” is stated with the bells still interwoven.

The oboe states a melodic theme in “Love’s first loss” with the dawning realization that the drums of war are beating and the time is drawing close to when the battleships march to war.

Not all find the prospect of war daunting and dance “A Lumbering Treble Jig celebrating the onset of hostilities”. The tubular bells join in with the woodwinds & strings; pealing single notes & flourishes until the virtuosic full melody is heard with the brass in bold counterpoint.

The melody is then passed around in the woodwinds & solo strings fading away to a sense of uncertainty. The tubular bells lead the orchestra into an reprise of “Love’s first loss” and the bells echo the church scene. Scurrying strings lead to a parody of the melody taken up by solo winds until the soloist plays a cadenza with “The bells foretelling doom”.

The mood changes to a dark place with “The terrible machine of war” with the snare drum providing distant machine gun fire and the soloist exploring the depths of the bass drum with distant cannon fire. The low brass plays disturbing fortissimo descending chords and, in turn, are mocked by muted trumpets. A fractured fugue is passed around the orchestra and many search for dominance whilst the bass drum relentlessly drives forward.

The fugue steps abruptly and the bass drum crescendos dramatically around the orchestra and many search for dominance whilst the bass drum relentlessly drives forward. The fugue is then passed around the woodwinds & solo strings fading away to a sense of uncertainty.

The woodwinds take up the theme and the crotales sing of death. A mark tree brings in a new section where the bell notes and phrases in the woodwinds & strings imitate a small French church organ. The soloist performs various bell-like percussion in accompaniment. The woodwinds play a haunting melody, which leads into the vibraphone feature “The winter comes and you are not here”. The inspiration for this melody comes from the composer’s poem:

Slowly with wonder so softly
Your light brings beauty in the Heavens
In the twilight and the dawning, I sit here
Waiting for my love, to come in, from the cold

I see visions of our future life.
I see beauty in a love like ours
And the snow falls silently, wordlessly
Softly creating a tapestry of beauty
To match our love

Crystals forming each one different
Pure love’s like this
Swirling, twirling, gently turning
I fall with you
Safe in your arms

Slowly with wonder, so softly
Your light brings beauty in the Heavens
In the night time
The shadow time
I sit here,
Waiting for my love,
To come in, from the cold

I see visions of our future life.
I see beauty in a love like ours
In the wonder of the night the snow falls softly

In the Heavens

Crystals forming each one different
Pure love’s like this
Swirling, twirling, gently turning
I fall with you
Safe in your arms

The inspiration for this melody comes from the composer’s poem:

“The winter comes and you are not here” is performed by the Cor Anglais with the Oboe taking over. Our lovers reunite.

The wind moves to an off stage position and strange sounds emanate from the orchestra. Gongs, scrapes, squeaks, distant calls and snatches of falling melodies paint a bleak landscape of a pointless war having stalled in the mud.

The vibraphone fades away and we find ourselves in a different kind of cold, one with a fear on the edges

“Winter at the front, your letter arrives” - Time is very elastic during this section and the creation of a desolate cold atmosphere is paramount. The brass move to an off stage position and strange sounds emanate from the orchestra. Gongs, scrapes, squeaks, distant calls and

snatches of falling melodies paint a bleak landscape of a pointless war having stalled in the mud.

“The birds take up the cry of despair” and then cease with the winter choral. A different birdcall sounds, one with more hope that spring is coming. The waterphone dies away and beauty returns.

The brass plays in the distance whilst “Bells remembered” is performed on a set of wind chimes – “Encore Chimes of Earth”. The strings take up the song of the chimes and propel us urgently into the marimba cadenza, followed by “Springtime and the lassus return to the woods”.

The marimba plays the fresh joy of spring accompanied by a simple melody on the violins. The opening theme is quoted on orchestral bells and the marimba launches a full dash “running through the woods”. The trumpet playing of warlike calls follows a short cadenza. The solo snare drum and orchestral snare drum join in a devastating battle.

“The march of the headless chickens” verses with instruments scurrying this way and that way to keep out of the way of the machine gun snare. Bells return with a brief heavenly interlude based on the words “Christ Divine” and we continue the march. Visions of heaven reappear with the last glimpse of vibraphone.

“Love’s reawakening” is performed by the Cor Anglais with the Oboe taking over. Our lovers reunite.

The tubular bells act like church bells in the village, and fade into the distance with ghostly echoes.

Dedicated with much love to Suzanne Kompass

Sean Ó’Boyle
June 14, 2014
Portraits of Immortal Love
A Concerto for Percussion & Orchestra

Deliberately with much Rubato

Rubato - Con Molto Passione

“Love’s first awakening”
"Church Bells before the gathering storm"
Fl.1

Cl.1

Solo Perc.

Tub. B.

Hp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

22

23

sotto voce

Tubular Bells

gliss with feather

soAo voce

flutes

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3
"Love's first loss"
With passion
poco rall.
With passion
poco rall.
“A Lumbering Treble jig celebrating the onset of hostilities”

Fl.1

Ob.1

C. A.

Cl.1

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

Solo Perc.

Orch Perc.

Hp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vc.

Db.
[Music notation image with various musical instruments and instructions for performance]
"with fear and trepidation"
Solo- Ad Lib
“The bells foretelling doom”
"The terrible machine of war"

A tempo

Slight accel....
"A letter from the front"
Faster - with trepidation
Slower \( \text{q} = 60 \)

3 suspended cymbals

Mark Tree

Chinese Bell Tree

To Tub. B.

Tubular Bells
"The winter comes and you are not here"
Solo Perc

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Cl.1

Cl.2

Glock.

Hp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vc.

...with bow

...sul tasto

...Solo exp...

SAMPLE SCORE
Solo Perc

F. Cym.

Glock.

Timp.

Vln. I

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Fl.2

Cl.2

Bsn.1

Ob.1

C. A.

Bsn.1

Solo Perc

Fl.2

Cl.2

Ob.1

C. A.

Bsn.1

F. Cym.

Glock.

Timp.

Vln. I

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Fl.2

Cl.2

Bsn.1

Ob.1

C. A.

Bsn.1

Fl.2

Cl.2

Ob.1

C. A.

Bsn.1

F. Cym.

Glock.

Timp.

Vln. I

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Fl.2

Cl.2

Bsn.1

Ob.1

C. A.

Bsn.1

F. Cym.

Glock.

Timp.

Vln. I

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Time is very elastic during this section
the creation of a desolate cold atmosphere
is paramount - Brass Move Off Stage

"Winter at the front, your letter arrives"

"Winter at the front, your letter arrives"
Waterphone (guide) with bow

triangle beater scrape on different parts of the tam tam

Scraped with triangle beater

Running fingers laterally along string (squeak)
Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
C. A.
Cl.1
Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
Solo Perc
Timp.
T.-t.
Cym.
Hp.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

whistle tone (random pitch)

Ghost Whistle

random squeaks - play behind bridge

poco accel.

ord Sul D

overpressure

(Sul Tasto)

overpressure

(Sul Tasto)
"The birds take up the cry of despair"
Strict tempo is not an issue - ensemble is the desire

with drama

random squeaks - play behind bridge

Random glissandi with open harmonics - bow near bridge
random "seagull effect" produced by harmonic glissandi on unstopped strings
Nightingale Birdcall - in the distance
Align the Strings to the Brass chord

Brass quietly move back on stage
Woodwind in the distance

Stricter Tempo
fade away
fade rolls...
Mark Tree
little rolls...
gently push chimes into the clapper allowing any natural rebounds to keep ringing.

"Encore Chimes of Earth - Verdigris"
Faster

387

C. A.

Bsn.I

Solo Perc

Timp.

Tub. B.

Hp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.
"Springtime and the leaves return to the woods"

398
Expressively with Rubato

Solo Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Gliss
Driving
"Running through the woods"
"Sound the Alarm, a breakthrough is near"
The march of the headless chickens"
Slower - Rubato

"Homecoming"

Solo Perc.

Tubular Bells
"Love's reawakening"  q=54  Rubato - Con Molto Passione

SAMPLE SCORE

Solo Perc.  To Tub. B.
Solo Tubular Bells keep steady tempo regardless of the glorious rubato of the orchestra

like a murmer

Sus Cym let ring

To Glock.

morendo

like a murmer

morendo

morendo

morendo

morendo

morendo

like a murmer