

# night airs

Sheena Phillips

Composition for string orchestra, flute and oboe

Full score

Commissioned by St Magnus International Festival for Orkney Camerata, in 2016

## Preface / Programme Note

This piece was commissioned by the St Magnus International Festival for Orkney Camerata in 2016. As the rest of Orkney Camerata's festival programme included Eastern European repertoire, I decided to base my own piece partly on *Esti Dal* (Evening Song), a traditional Hungarian melody that I knew from its beautiful choral arrangement by Kodály. I also wanted to connect the piece to Orkney. Looking at images of the Orkney landscape, and seeing the graceful rises and falls of the skyline, it struck me that the melody of the Orkney song *The Great Selkie of Sule Skerry* had very similar contours. So I set to work to pair these two tunes – or airs. Like our own thoughts, and like the night air itself, the melodies come to us both in long stretches and in short snatches, transformed and interrupted in various ways, at times soothing and unruffled, at others stirring or sad.

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Duration c. 6:20

Instrumentation : flute, oboe, violin 1, violin 2, viola, violincello, double bass

Notation / technique:

- three-stroke tremolos are unmeasured
- play grace notes before the beat
- col legno (bowed): bow with the wood, moving over the fingerboard if the sound in the normal position is too loud or squeaky
- unpitched air sound (flute): blow into rather than across the mouthpiece to create mostly unpitched air noise

Sheena Phillips

www.sheenaphillips.com  
sheenaphillips@gmail.com  
07519 517176

# night airs

Flute, Oboe, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violincello, Double Bass

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**Andante sostenuto** ♩ = 72

unpitched air sound over the length of one breath  
(finger Eb, blow into flute, morphing between ee and oh vowels)

Flute (Piccolo) *p* *mf* *mf* *p*

Oboe

Violin I *p* col legno (bowed)

Violin II *p* col legno (bowed)

Viola *p* col legno (bowed)

Cello *p* col legno (bowed)

Contrabass *p* col legno (bowed)

8 Fl. *p* *mf* *p* to piccolo piccolo

Ob.

Vln. I *pp* *p* ord.

Vln. II *pp* *p* ord.

Vla. *pp* *p* ord.

Vc. *pp* *p* ord. pizz.

Cb. *p*

A poco più mosso ♩ = 80

16

Fl. *mf* *p* to flute

Ob.

Vln. I *mf* *p* *p* *dolcissime* flautando solo *mf* 3

Vln. II *mf* *p* *pp* flautando

Vla. *mf* *p* *pp* flautando

Vc. *mf* *p* *pp* flautando

Cb. arco *pp* sul. Pont. *pp*

*mf* *pp*

a tempo

22

Fl. flute *mf* 3

Ob. *p* *mf* *p*

Vln. I *mf* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *p*

Vla. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Vc. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Cb. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

*mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

**B** più mosso, poco agitato

$\text{♩} = 80$

flutter tonguing

28

Fl. *p* *f* *p*

Ob. *p*

Vln. I *p* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *p*

Vla. *p* *mf* *p*

Vc. *p* *mf* *p*

Cb.

34

Fl. *mf*

Ob.

Vln. I *p* *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf* *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*

C sempre con moto

38

Fl. *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p*

Ob. *f dolce*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p*

Vln. I *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p* solo *p*

Vln. II *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p* *p*

Vla. *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p* *p*

Vc. *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p* *p*

Cb. *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p* *p* pizz.

43

Fl. *mf*

Ob.

Vln. I *mf* tutti

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf* *p cresc.*

Vc. *mf* *p cresc.*

Cb. *mf* *p cresc.*

rit.

48

Fl. *f* *p*

Ob. *f* *mf dolce* *p*

Vln. I *mf* *f* *p* *mf dolce* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *f* *p* *mf dolce* *p*

Vla. *f* *p* *mf dolce* *p*

Vc. *f* *p* *pizz.* *p*

Cb. *mf* *p*

**D** a tempo, con moto ♩ = 80

Fl. *mf spirito* *f* *p*

Ob. *mf leggero*

Vln. I *p subito spirito* *tutti p* *cresc.*

Vln. II *p cresc.*

Vla. *mf cantabile*

Vc. *arco* *mf cantabile*

Cb. *mf*

61

Fl. *f* *p* *mf*

Ob. *p*

Vln. I *mf* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *p*

Vla. *p* *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*

66 ft. E

Fl. *f*

Ob. *f* *p*

Vln. I *mf* *f* *p* solo *p* *mf* *mf*

Vln. II *mf* *f* *p*

Vla. *mf* *f* *p*

Vc. *mf* *f* *p*

Cb. arco sul. Pont. *p*



on the breeze (upper strings floating over cello line)

72

Fl.

Ob.

Vln. I *tutti*  
*p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p cantabile* *mf* *p* *mf*

Cb.

77

Fl.

Ob. *pressing forward*

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

81

Fl.

Ob.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*f*

*f* *3*

*p*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*p*

solo

solo

solo

*p*

**F** meno mosso, largamente ♩=72

Fl.

Ob.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f* cantabile

f.t.

morendo

*p*

*mf*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

sul. Pont.

*p*

poco rit.

94

Fl. *p* *f.t.* *pp*

Ob. *p*

Vln. I *p* *dolce* *pp* *p*

Vln. II *p* *dolce* *pp* *p*

Vla. *p* *dolce* *pp* *p*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *pizz.*

G Tempo primo, languid ♩ = 72

Fl. (solo) (mel. *Esti Dal*) *p*

Ob. *p tranquillo*

Vln. I *p* *mp*

Vln. II *p* *mp*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p* col legno (bowed, freely)

Cb. *p* arco col legno (bowed, freely)

107 H

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

Ob. *mf* *p* *pp* *mf dolce*

Vln. I *p* *mf* *p* *pp* *mf dolce*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *p* *pp* *mf dolce*

Vla. *p* *mf* *p* *pp* *p* *Con sord.*

Vc. *p* *mf* *p* *pp* *p* *Con sord.*

Cb. *p* *mf* *p* *pp* *p* *Con sord.*

114 *to piccolo* *piccolo*

Fl. *mf* *p* *p*

Ob. *mf* *p* *p*

Vln. I *p* *mf* *Con sord.* *tutti* *p* *Con sord.*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *Con sord.* *tutti* *p* *Con sord.*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

Cb. *p* *Con sord.* *mp*

121

Fl. *p*  $\triangleleft$  *mf* to flute

Ob. *p*

Vln. I *mf* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *p*

Vla. *p*  $\triangleleft$  *mf* *p* *mp* *p*

Vc. *p* *pizz.*  $\triangleleft$  *mf* *p* *mp* *p*

Cb. *p*

129

Fl. flute unpitched air sound (finger Eb) (flute sound continues until end of breath) *mf*  $\triangleleft$  *p* *mf*  $\triangleleft$  *p*

Ob. *p*<sup>3</sup>

Vln. I *p* senza vib. Senza sord. *p* col legno (bowed) *pp*

Vln. II *p* senza vib. Senza sord. *p* col legno (bowed) *pp*

Vla. *p* senza vib. col legno (bowed) *p* *pp*

Vc. *p* senza vib. col legno (bowed) *p* *pp*

Cb. *p*

2 or 3 soli II

*pp*