

William Neil

Where There Is No Autumn
(2012)

TheComposerStudio.Com LLC

Instrumentation

narrator

Bb clarinet

piano

digital acoustic

Duration: ca. 15 mins

Notes

D.H. Lawrence wrote in a letter: "I want to go south, where there is no autumn, where the cold doesn't crouch over one now leopard waiting to pounce." His time in Italy fostered a rich collection of poems that embrace the sensuality of nature, vitality of a sun that he followed in his travels in southern Italy. And behind his wildly observant poetic images, he relates the complexity of human relationships with the intensity of that mediterranean sun. In *Where There is No Autumn*, Neil has created a musical setting of "Southern Night", "Pomegranate", "Peach" and "Tropic" scored for narrator, clarinet, and digital acoustics. Neil transforms Lawrence's in the moment, first person narratives into a rich spectrum of sonorities that restate the spoken word with the full dynamic capabilities of the clarinet and piano. The ensemble is enveloped in the sounds that are heard through speakers on stage.

"Southern Night" opens with a very ritualistic treatment of the text, the digital part developing a tension that explodes into the clarinet and piano gestures. In "Pomegranate" each of the references to location, Syracuse, Venice and Tuscany in the poem are treated as separate musical events. The poem ends with Lawrence's challenge to the reader to fully appreciate the experience of breaking open the fruit and enjoying its colourful splendour. Here, Neil combines all three of the previous settings in a cascade of piano and clarinet trills that ends in a slow, contemplative, harmonic constellation that resolves when the clarinet reaches its final note. "Peach" enlivens the tension that Lawrence creates in his question and answer formant of the poem with a very dynamic and dramatic digital part with the piano and clarinet resonating each of the questions. In the final piece, Neil combines three manifestations of a rhythm that correspond to the Lawrence's reference to the "horizontal rolling of water" with rising themes in the clarinet that evoke the "the flood of black heat"

texts by D.H. Lawrence, are in the public domain

ERN NIGHT

, thou red thing,
, and be called a moon.

quitoes are biting tonight
nories.

s, northern memories,
nging white world that bore us
g into this night.

onrise
anathema?
u red thing!
lowly upwards, blood-dark;
night's membrane of tranquil stars

:
Macula.

POMEGRANATE

You tell me I am wrong.
Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong?
I am not wrong.

In Syracuse, rock left bare by the viciousness of Greek
women,
No doubt you have forgotten the pomegranate trees in
flower,
Oh so red, and such a lot of them.

Whereas at Venice,
Abhorrent, green, slippery city
Whose Doges were old, and had ancient eyes,
In the dense foliage of the inner garden
Pomegranates like bright green stone, And barbed, barbed with a crown.
Oh, crown of spiked green metal Actually growing!

Now in Tuscany,
Pomegranates to warm your hands at;
And crowns, kingly, generous, tilting crowns
Over the left eyebrow.

And, if you dare, the fissure!

Do you mean to tell me you will see no fissure?
Do you prefer to look on the plain side?

For all that, the setting suns are open.
The end cracks open with the beginning:
Rosy, tender, glittering within the fissure.

Do you mean to tell me there should be no fissure?
No glittering, compact drops of dawn?
Do you mean it is wrong, the gold-filmed skin, integument,
shown ruptured?

s
For my part, I prefer my heart to be
is so lovely, dawn-kaleidoscopic within the crack.

.CH

Would you like to throw a stone at me?
No, take all that's left of my peach.

Indred, deep;
No one knows how it came to pass.
No one's pound of flesh rendered up.

Stalked with secrets
Hard with the intention to keep them.

Not from silvery peach-bloom,
Not in that shallow-silvery wine-glass on a short stem
rolling, dropping, heavy globule?

Not thinking, of course, of the peach before I ate it.

Not so velvety, why so voluptuous heavy?
Not hanging with such inordinate weight?
Not so indented?

Not the groove?
Not the lovely, bivalve roundnesses?
Not the ripple down the sphere?
Not the suggestion of incision?

Not was not my peach round and finished like a billiard
ball?
Not could have been if man had made it.
Not though I've eaten it now.

Not it wasn't round and finished like a billiard ball;
Not because I say so, you would like to throw something
at me.

No, you can have my peach stone.

TROPIC

Sun, dark sun,
Sun of black void heat,
Sun of the torrid mid-day's horrific darkness:

Behold my hair twisting and going black.
Behold my eyes turn tawny yellow
Negroid;
See the milk of northern spume
Coagulating and going black in my veins
Aromatic as frankincense.

Columns dark and soft,
Sunblack men,
Soft shafts, sunbreathing mouths,
Eyes of yellow, golden sand
As frictional as perilous, explosive brimstone.

Rock, waves of dark heat;
Waves of dark heat, rock, sway upwards,
Waver perpendicular.

What is the horizontal rolling of water
Compared to the flood of black heat that rolls up-
ward past my eyes?

dedicated to Bethan Jones and John Worthen

Southern Night

vrence

Will

Lento Misterioso

♩=50

Soprano

Come up, thou red thing. Come up, and be called a moon.

Clarinet in B♭

♩=50

gliss.

Staff with triplet markings and a forte dynamic (*f*) at the end.

Tape

Tape

1

pp

ppp

Piano

ad. libitum

pp

Copyright © 2012 by William Neil

Red

2

The mosquitoes are biting tonight Like memories. Memories, northern n



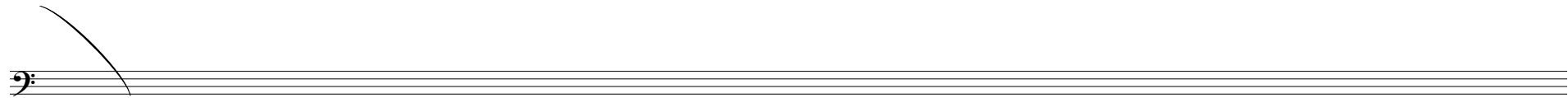
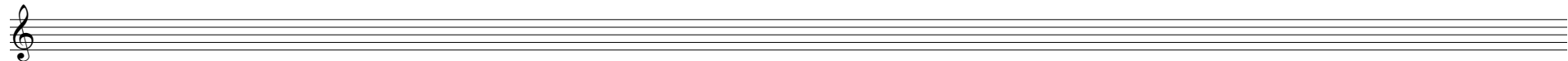
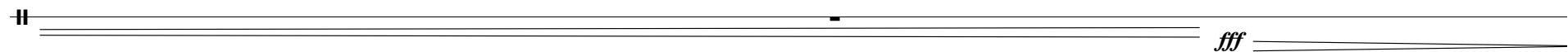
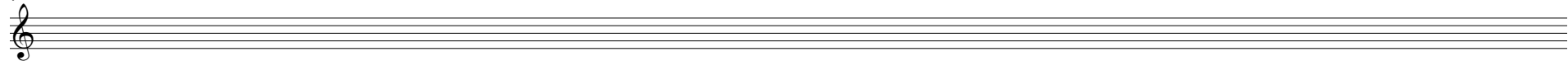
pp

3

Bitter-stinging white world that bore us
Subsiding into this night.

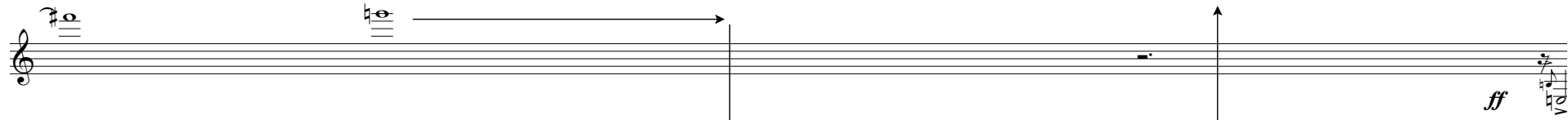
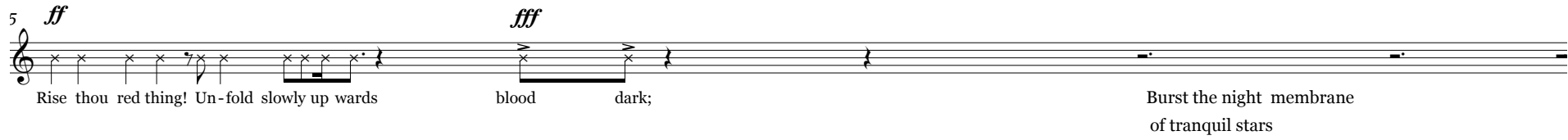
The musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The second staff is a treble clef staff with a long horizontal line and an arrow pointing to the right, ending with a fermata. The third staff is a piano staff with two ledger lines below the staff, also with a long horizontal line and an arrow pointing to the right, ending with a fermata. A finger number '2' with a hand icon is positioned above the piano staff. The fourth staff is a treble clef staff with a piano part starting with a forte (*ff*) dynamic, marked with a hairpin crescendo and then decrescendo. The fifth staff is a bass clef staff with a piano part starting with a piano (*ppp*) dynamic. The piano part features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed notes and accidentals.

4 Call it moonrise This red anathema?

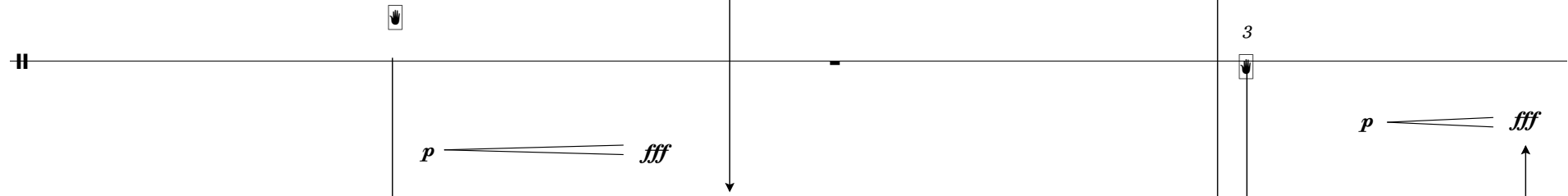
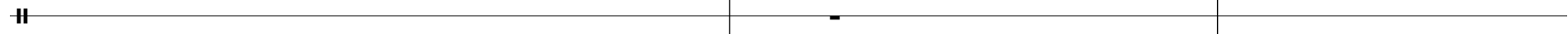


5 *ff* *fff*

Rise thou red thing! Un-fold slowly up wards blood dark; Burst the night membrane of tranquil stars

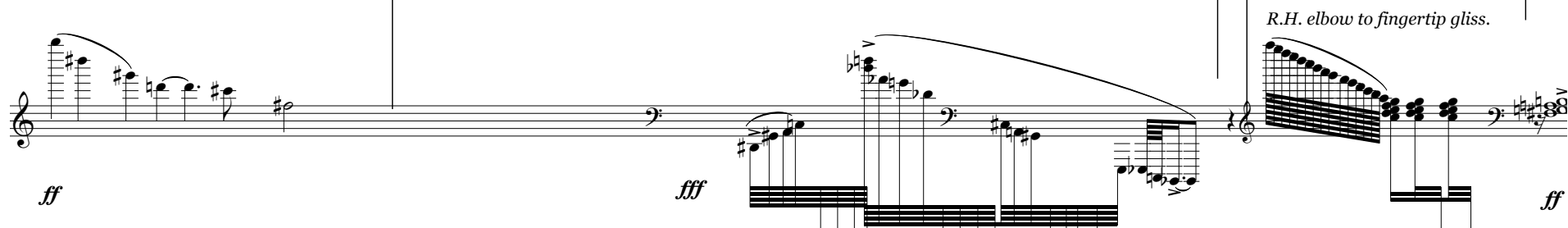


ff



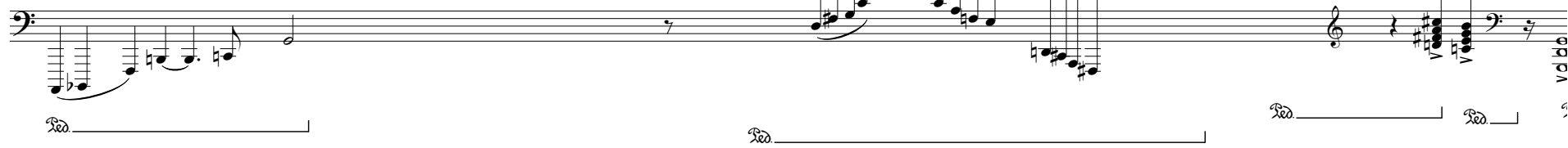
p *fff* *p* *fff*

3



ff *fff* *ff*

R.H. elbow to fingertip gliss.



ff

6

f (in a loud whisper)

Finally.

Maculate the red ma

f *p* *fff*

fff

fff

gliss. 3