

Paul Salerni

Something Permanent

(poems by Cynthia Rylant on photographs by Walker Evans)

for

Soprano and Pianoforte

I. Land

II. Mission

III. Minstrels

IV. Boys

V. Apartment

VI. Bed

VII. Rocker

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I. Land

Andante

♩=80

p

Soprano

She thought she could re - mem - ber a

The first system of the score shows the Soprano and Piano parts for measures 1 and 2. The Soprano part is in 4/4 time, starting with a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4, and a half note B4. The Piano part consists of a right hand with a continuous eighth-note pattern of G4-A4-B4-C5 and a left hand with a similar eighth-note pattern of G3-A3-B3-C4. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a quarter note equal to 80 beats per minute. The dynamics are marked 'p' (piano).

3

time when the land was beau - ti - ful to

The second system of the score shows measures 3, 4, and 5. The Soprano part continues with a half note C5, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note D5, and a half note E5. The Piano part continues with the same eighth-note patterns. The dynamics are marked 'simile' (sìmile). The system ends with a double bar line.

6

her, and the clouds were the province of

The third system of the score shows measures 6, 7, and 8. The Soprano part continues with a half note F5, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note G5, and a half note A5. The Piano part continues with the same eighth-note patterns. The system ends with a double bar line.

21

mf

had a sting and eyes red and tired, but she fi-gured

mp

25

cresc. poco a poco

she must be mis-ta-ken, must have heard some-thing in

cresc. poco a poco

molto rit.

f

28

church a-bout that,

f

30

30

pp

32 **Pesante** **Allargando** *ff*

be-cause the earth ne - ver was no-thing but work.

f *ff*

1 *mf* ♩=75

Lord it was no place for a man to end up.

5 *mp* *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

He'd walked circ - les a - round it for days. But when

8

he fi - nal - ly did pass through that door and

11 *f*

feel the prea - cher's hand on his tired, warm

14 *p* poco rit.

head, the shame slipped off him like rain

A tempo *poco rit.* *pp*

17

and he was a child a - gain: hun - gry, still, pure.

Raggy

III. Minstrels

8

1 $\text{♩} = 112$

mf
It did-n't mat-ter if

4

no - bo - dy re - mem - bered them la - ter on..

6

if no-bo-dy re-mem-bered

9

them la - ter on. They'd had a few mo

12

ments to them- selves, on that stage,

This system contains the musical notation for measures 12 and 13. It features a vocal line with a long melisma over the word 'selves' and a piano accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands.

14

And no - bo - dy knew

This system contains the musical notation for measures 14 and 15. The vocal line begins with a rest and then enters with the lyrics 'And no - bo - dy knew'. The piano accompaniment continues with harmonic support.

16

how much they would have paid to

p

This system contains the musical notation for measures 16 and 17. The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'how much they would have paid to'. A piano dynamic marking (*p*) is placed above the final note of the vocal line. The piano accompaniment features a more active melodic line in the right hand.

19 poco ad lib. quasi recitativo senza tempo

get that time when no white folks could interfere

p

In tempo

pp

24

in their lives. When not a person

pp

28

on this earth could touch or disturb them,

31

lest be ac-cused of spoil - ing what some con - si - dered

This system contains measures 31, 32, and 33. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a fermata over measures 31 and 32, and a second fermata over measures 32 and 33. There are two '2' markings above the vocal line, indicating a second ending or a specific phrasing.

A tempo

34

a good show. They

mf *pp* *mf* *f* *mf*

mf *f*

This system contains measures 34, 35, 36, and 37. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamic markings: *mf* (measures 34-35), *pp* (measure 35), *mf* (measure 36), *f* (measures 36-37), and *mf* (measure 37). A tempo marking of *A tempo* and a metronome marking of $\text{♩} = 120$ are present. The piano part also includes a fermata over measures 36 and 37.

38

would have worked for free, for free, like slaves,

This system contains measures 38 and 39. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a fermata over measures 38 and 39.

40

This system contains measures 40 and 41. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a fermata over measures 40 and 41.

12

42

mf

They__ would have worked for__ free, like__ slaves,

44

just for those mi__ nutes of be-ing

47

just for those mi

50

nutes of be-ing no such thing.

f *mf*

54

f *p* *pp*

Sexy

IV. Boys

14
1 ♩=55

p They both loved the same

girl but she would-n't have ei-ther of them

be-cause she was mar-ried - and to the

11 *mf* 15 *p*

store ow-ner by god, so

14

it was-n't worth think-ing a-bout. But at

18 *mf*

night, they each stretched u - pon a bed

20

f *mp*

and had her had her whole and

25

f *mp*

lei-sure-ly. And when they were done, they

29

p

settl - ed her back in their mind like a soft peach will

32

dis - ap pear in - to a young boy's pock - et,

3

3

3

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 32 through 35. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 32-35. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and triplets. The lyrics are: "dis - ap pear in - to a young boy's pock - et,".

36

warm Au - gust nights.

pp

3

3

3

3

pp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 36 through 39. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 36-39. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and triplets. The lyrics are: "warm Au - gust nights.". Dynamic markings include *pp* above the vocal line and *pp* below the piano accompaniment.

40

rit.

ppp

Hmm.

3

3

ppp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 40 through 43. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 40-43. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and triplets. The lyrics are: "rit.". Dynamic markings include *ppp* above the vocal line and *ppp* below the piano accompaniment. The system ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.

Motoric

V. Apartment

187

$\text{♩} = 140$

mf

When her re - la - tives

When her re - la - tives

4

from the south

came up for a vis - it,

from the south came up for a vis - it,

8

they la - ment - ed her sor - ry state,

they la - ment - ed her sor - ry state,

12

hav - ing to live in that lit - tle box

hav - ing to live in that lit - tle box

15

hav-ing no field nor trees, hav-ing no

18

hills to look toward. She never told them how

22

she did-n't miss those things, how she would

27

— like a-wake at night, — her a -

30

part-ment win-dow wide o - pen, — and

33

f somewhat free, bird-like

lis - ten to the ci - ty — like she was list-en-ing

f somewhat free, bird-like

36

like she was list - en - ing like she was list - en - ing

38

like she was list - en - ing **Ad lib.** *p* to

40

In tempo, ma come prima

birds *trill* **f** like she was list - en ing like she was list - en - ing

p *trill* **f** somewhat free, bird-like

Ad lib. *p* **rit.** **Gentle tango** *p*

44 *f* $\text{♩} = 110$

to hymns, like she was hear-ing a lo - ver.

molto rit. **Tempo primo**

49 *pp* $\text{♩} = 140$

a lo - ver.

mf

54 *mf*

She ne - ver told them how hard it was to

f
wipe that smile off her face

p each and e - very *f* time

Ad lib.

In tempo ma un poco meno mosso

$\text{♩} = 130$

p
— they com - plained.

Gentle tango

VI. Bed

24¹ ♩=100 *p*

Of course, it was hard to make love with the child-ren in the

6

room

9

but that did - n't keep them from try - ing, and

12

they were pret - ty suc - cess - ful some would say,

since they _____ had se - ven kids

simile

now. He would be - gin it by reach - ing o - ver and soft - ly

pp *mp*

pull - ing at a slen - der piece of her long hair, wrapp - ing it in his

fin - gers, and then dead ti - red but still in love,

p *pp*

26³⁰ *mp* *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

they would turn toward each o - ther and ne - stled in the warm

33 *mf*

breath - ing of their oth - er ba - bies, ease their wea - ry

37 *p*

minds with the sex they knew would like - ly

40 *mf* *poco rit.* *mp* *p* *A tempo* *pp*

make them poor - er and

46

mp

rit. pp

27

rich - er _____ at the same time.

Gently rocking

VII. Rocker

1

$\text{♩} = 75$

She want - ed to be sure to hear _____ the o - ther ba ___ bies

9

sub p

if they cried, ___ so ___ she nursed them, one at a time, ___

28¹⁶

sub p

at the bot - tom of the stairs _____ then car - ried them one at a

22

mp

p

pp

time, _____ soft - ly up, soft - ly up, soft - ly up, _____

31

p

poco rit. *A tempo*

pp

_____ their small hearts beat - ing. _____

38

poco rit.