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The Transmutation of the Immutable Abyss

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THE TRANSMUTATION OF THE IMMUTABLE ABYSS

by

Amanda McCullough

A DOCTORAL DOCUMENT

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Major: Music

Under the Supervision of Professor Tyler Goodrich White

Lincoln, Nebraska

May, 2017
The Transmutation of the Immutable Abyss is a song cycle for a female voice and chamber orchestra, originally inspired by the instrumentation of a community theater pit orchestra. This piece sets eight poems by A. R. Ammons over eight movements. One primary goal of this piece was to combine elements of jazz and contemporary classical music.

The Transmutation of the Immutable Abyss also explores duality along with the combination of disparate elements to create a more complete whole. In a literal sense, jazz and classical elements coexist in varying amounts of prominence. Also in a literal sense, elements of tonality such as clear tonal centers are conflicting with moments of nontriadic, including the fifth movement which is serial. The narrative tells a story of metamorphosis and circularity, reflected in the selected poems of A. R. Ammons. Often the circularity of the text reflects opposing forces, creating again, a sense of duality.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee, Drs. Tyler Goodrich White, Greg Simon, Joy Castro and Prof. Tom Larson. I would also like to thank my previous composition teachers, Drs. Eric Richards and Gordon McQuere.
Table of Contents

Instrumentation and Duration.................................................................vi
Performance Notes.................................................................................vii
Introduction..............................................................................................viii
The Transmutation of the Immutable Abyss...............................................1

I. Prologue..............................................................................................1
II. Songlet..............................................................................................19
III. Reflective..........................................................................................29
IV. Utensil..............................................................................................47
V. Small Song..........................................................................................62
VI. Hollows............................................................................................67
VII. Utensil Reprise/Mirrorment...............................................................80
VIII. Sphere, Come Prima, Sphere............................................................84

Bibliography..........................................................................................109

APPENDIX A: Text...............................................................................110

APPENDIX B: Original Source Text.........................................................113

APPENDIX C: Movement V Matrix.........................................................116
Instrumentation and Duration

approx. 22’30”

Soprano/Mezzo-soprano

Flute/Piccolo

Oboe/English Horn

Clarinet in Bb

Trumpet/Flugelhorn in Bb

Trombone

Piano

Percussion 1
(Bass Drum, Glockenspiel, Chimes, Suspended Cymbal, Claves, Guiro, Tambourine)

Percussion 2
(Suspended Cymbal, Snare Drum, Triangle, Crotales)

2 Violins

Viola

Cello

Bass
Performance Notes

The housetop “^” accent is the only accent that indicates a tongue stop articulation. All other accents should be performed within the norms of modern “classical” performance practice.

The improvised trumpet and trombone solos should be muted. This choice of mutes is left up to the performer.

Any ossia in the vocal part can be taken at any time by the soprano/mezzo-soprano so the part will better fit her voice.
Introduction

The Transmutation of the Immutable Abyss explores duality and the combination of disparate elements to create a more complete whole. In a literal sense, jazz and classical elements coexist in varying amounts of prominence. Also in a literal sense, elements of tonality such as clear tonal centers, are conflicting with moments of nontriadic harmony, including the fifth movement which is serial. The narrative tells a story of metamorphosis and circularity, reflected in the selected poems of A. R. Ammons. Often the circularity of the text reflects opposing forces, creating again, a sense of duality. Examples of circularity in the text include the text of the third movement, Reflective; the text of the fifth movement, Small Song; and the inserted poem in the seventh movement, Mirrorman.1 The main purpose for this piece was to create a musical world where elements of contemporary classical and jazz styles can coexist and transition between each other seamlessly.

The instrumentation of this piece2 was originally inspired by the instrumentation of a pit orchestra. The original version was written as a warm up for the pit orchestra for the Lincoln Community Playhouse’s 2016 production of My Fair Lady. The original version of the fifth movement was written for the composition portion of the comprehensive exam.

The text is a collection of poems from A. R. Ammons, arranged in an order to imply a metamorphosis or journey. The vocalist is given the opportunity to create a

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1 See Appendix A for text.
2 Full instrumentation is listed on page vi
character (or multiple characters as would be appropriate particularly in the seventh movement) if she so chooses.

I. Prologue

The first movement is instrumental and its purpose is to set the stage for the singer in the second movement and throughout the rest of the piece. Another important element introduced in the first movement is the tritone motive. This motive is first introduced in mm. 1-2 as shown in the score reduction in Figure 1, below.

The form of the first movement is ternary with the contrasting B section beginning in m. 43 after a transition in mm. 27-42 and the return of A occurring in m. 55. Since the material in A does not return in its entirety, an argument could be made for this movement being a rounded binary. However, the B section is distinctly different in sound, using a more transparent texture and a slower tempo. Also, there is a tonal center of Bb in the B section while the A sections are less distinctly tonal. Bb is implied by
repetition in both the bass and melodic instruments and a modal mixture of Bb major and minor are implied in the melody in the strings and woodwinds. In the A sections, the repeated chords in the strings and piano are built from two tritones a minor second apart, or set class 4-9 (0167). Finally, the motivic and melodic content of the B section is very different from the two A sections.

The final chord of the movement contains a modal mixture of D major and minor triads with the major third only occurring in the trumpet. This chord acts as a dominant to the tonal center in the second movement, G minor. It also reinforces the sense of duality between tonal and nontriadic elements in the first movement.

II. Songlet

After a brief introduction in the piano and strings, the voice enters on the word “death”. Even though the piano and strings continue to prioritize G minor, the voice implies D/D minor as a tonal center and does not reach the pitch center until the cadence in m. 85 at the end of the first stanza of text. This cadence culminates on the word “leaves” where further word painting occurs with a sudden texture, dynamic and orchestration change.

Further examples of word-painting include: “unsteady” in m. 86, “we say, another adjustment as usual:” in m. 87, and “light” in m. 89. In m. 86, the word “unsteady” is set to a triplet creating a 2:3:4 ratio with the rhythms in the accompaniment. This hemiola creates an unsteady feeling in the declamation of the text. In m. 87, after the words “we
say”, the rest of the phrase is spoken instead of sung. Finally, in m. 89, the word “light” coincides with a G major chord before returning to G minor in the next measure.

The form of this movement can be described as unipartite, with a slightly varied repeat of the same material; in other words, subsections of A and A’. The movement as a whole prioritizes G minor, while the beginning of A’ briefly detours into G major on the word “light”. This movement ends on a B major triad over E in the bass, acting like a dominant over the pitch center in the next movement which is E.

III. Reflective

In this movement, jazz elements finally begin to be introduced. For example, melodic fills are written in trumpet and oboe between mm. 109-116 to emulate improvised fills. The fills become more elaborate in m. 117 and are traded between the flute, oboe, and clarinet. Another element borrowed from jazz style is the simulated ride pattern in the triangle. The written parts in the piano were inspired by jazz piano comping patterns and the bass is reminiscent of a walking bass line.

The tonal center is E, based on the repeated bass line as seen in Figure 2:

The main repeated melody throughout consists of a G and Bb at first, implying a minor mode with the inclusion of the tritone. As this melody/motive is harmonized, a B natural
and D are added, implying a Locrian #2 mode. This harmony was originally added with the idea of creating parallel major thirds.

The form of this movement is also unipartite, repeating the melodic motive over the repeating bass line (a four bar idea that repeats a smaller two bar idea as seen in the reduction in Figure 3, above) until it is built up into a frenzy, just to return to a quiet, more intimate orchestration at the entrance of the voice near the end.

The vocal part at the end of this movement was transcribed from a melody sung with the text, over the existing bass and triangle parts. It is marked in straight time, but implies swing through the use of triplet figures. After the voice finishes setting the poem, the movement ends with an improvised trombone solo, playing on some of the modal aspects of the piece and continuing the four bar idea.

IV. Utensil

The fourth movement continues expanding the jazz elements in the previous movement and includes completely improvised bass and piano parts. The bass line from movement III is moved into the viola and cello parts (with slight rhythmic alterations).
while the bass walks underneath. Overall, this movement acts like the continuation and
natural outgrowth of the previous movement.

The form of this movement is ternary, with a complete statement of the poem in
each A section and a trumpet solo in the B section. Several changes occur in A’ from the
original A. These include: the pitch level of A’ is up a fifth from A, the bass ceases
walking and is playing sustained pitches on the bow, and the bass line moves up into the
woodwinds, causing it to sound less like a bass line and more like an accompanimental
gesture. The effect of these changes is that A’ has a more floating ethereal character
rather than a rhythmic character like its counterpart in A.

V. Small Song

Unlike the other movements, this movement was originally written with a soprano
in mind and has the highest range of any of the movements. It also presents a distinct
departure stylistically from the movements that came before it. Instead of including jazz
elements, there is an emphasis on 12-tone construction throughout the movement.

The clarinet melody is derived from the row (in concert pitch): E, C, B, F#, G, D,
Eb, C#, A, G#, F, Bb. The vocal melody is based on P9 with the addition of two dyads
from R4 and P4 respectively: Db, A, Ab, Eb, E, B, C, (D, A), (Bb), Bb, F#, (Ab, E), F, D,
G, Db. The notes in parentheses correspond with words repeated from the original text.
The original text contains 12 words and 13 syllables (the final syllable repeating the same
pitch as the row began). On page xiv, Figure 4 which shows how the pitch classes
respond to the original words and repeated words (shown in parentheses).
The other wind and string instruments besides the clarinet are used to create atmosphere under the clarinet and voice. The rolled dyads are similar in construction to the dyads that began the piece in the piano as shown below in Figure 5. In the percussion, the bass drum with superball mallet corresponds with the word “wind” in the text.

The form of this movement is unipartite, similar to other movements in this piece. Like other poems that are set in this song cycle, the text for this movement comes from Ammons’s book, *The Really Short Poems of A. R. Ammons*. These shorter poems are frequently conducive to simpler one-part structures.

VI. Hollows

The form of this movement is ternary and consists of a B section that is also used as a transition of the A section back to itself. The motive in the woodwinds of the A
section are an example of word-painting for the word “whirlwind”, consisting of sweeping groups of 32nd notes.

The piano dyads from I and V return in this movement as well, returning in the B section in order to distinguish it even further from the A sections. The tritone appears as well, although in more subtle ways than in previous movements. One example of the tritone motive is in the bass line, with a B-F in mm. 256-7 and D-G# in m. 264. In each case, the bass line eventually resolves to a perfect interval, either within the line (the B-F resolves to a pedal E) or as a harmonic interval (the D-G# resolves to a G natural in the cello and a C in the string bass). Another appearance of the tritone motive is what appears in the voice, as is shown in Figure 6, above.

In both examples, the span of the voice is a tritone. In the first example, this will “resolve” in the next phrase of the vocal line, which is the span of a perfect fourth. Another reason these vocal lines are the span of a tritone is because the vocal melody of this movement is pieced together from two natural minor scales a minor second apart: Ab and A minor, which is a similar construction to the repeated chords in the first movement’s A section which will reappear in the final movement. The coexistence of these two scales create a sense of duality, which will become even more prominent thematically in the next movement.
VII. Utensil Reprise/Mirrorment

The main purpose of this movement is to transition from the sixth movement to the eighth and final movement; at 17 measures, it is barely long enough to stand on its own. The idea of duality is expressed most clearly in this movement by the juxtaposition of the two short poems “Utensil” and “Mirrorment”. The combination of these two poems creates the strange, less grammatically sound phrases: “How does the pot pray: birds are flowers flying wash me, so I gleam? And flowers prays, perched birds. Crack my enamel: let the rust in.” The text of “Utensil” has already been heard twice in the fourth movement and contains the same melodic contour as before, so it can easily be identified from “Mirrorment”. The difference between the two poems is brought to further clarity by the placement of the voice. The text of “Utensil” occurs in a higher mid-range octave while “Mirrorment” occurs in the register at the bottom or below the staff. The “Mirrorment” melody is a melody unique to this movement and is in response to the melodic fragments of “Utensil”. This duality between the two disparate texts and differences in registers creates an opportunity for the vocalist to create different characters. It also foreshadows the same process of combining two poems that will occur with longer poems in the final movement.

VIII. Sphere, Come Prima, Sphere

The text of this movement is the combination of the poems “Sphere” and “Come Prima”. Unlike the previous movement however, “Come Prima” is inserted in its entirety in the midst of “Sphere”. The insertion of “Come Prima” occurs right before the last
stanza of “Sphere”; the last stanza coincides with the coda of the movement as the return of the material from the first movement in the previous section comes to gestural closure by departing from and returning to referential sonority.

The form of this movement can be described as through-composed. If only the style and character of each section is considered rather than the melodic material, there are repetitions of some sections, as is shown in the table in Figure 7, above. The ethereal, “sparkly” section that begins the piece is returned to several times during the movement (although with different melodic material) with contrasting sections in between.

The first contrasting section, beginning in m. 339 which marks a partial return to the A material of the first movement. The driving eighth notes in the strings and the rapid ascending passages in the woodwinds return while the melody (now in the vocal part) is different. Another differing section occurs beginning in m. 364, accompanying the return of the word “death” with the return of the music from the second movement, the first (and only other) occurrence of the word “death”. After another ethereal section, the orchestra vamps single measures of pointillistic bits of music as the vocalist recites the poem “Come Prima”. The final line of “Come Prima”, “I raise my hand”, ushers in the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Starting Measure</th>
<th>Ending Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part A: “Ethereal and Sparkly”</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part B: “Movement I”</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part C: “Movement II”</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part A’: “Ethereal and Sparkly”/transition</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part D: Vamp Section</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part B: “True Return of Movement I”</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part A’/Coda</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 7
The final section acts as a coda and sets the final stanza of “Sphere”. It returns to the style of the ethereal parts earlier in the movement. The pitch center of the final section is G, based on the repetition of G’s in the vocal part in mm. 412-3 and the G pedal in the low strings when they enter in m. 418 through m. 423. In mm. 423-4, the melody in the voice is A-C♯-D, mimicking a tonicization of the dominant. The ending measures prioritize D, reflected by the D in the bass, but to create ambiguity, the cello moves from a D to an Ab. The piece never returns to G despite longing to do so. Instead it ends with a D in the bass and bowed crotales, overlayed with three pizzicato Ab’s in all the other string parts. This results in the audience feeling suspended, waiting for the ending to return with another phrase in G, a hope left unfulfilled.

Metamorphosis From A Text Perspective

The entrance of the text in the second movement introduces the beginning of a journey or metamorphosis with the lines “kisses us awake into / the new world and leaves” (2-3) and “here: we turn to where / a beam forms and set out” (8-9). The third movement, using the text from the poem “Reflective”, follows its namesake in being reflective; the character portrayed in this piece by the singer talks about self reflection. An allusion to a willingness to accept change occurs in “Utensil” (IV) with the lines:
“prays, crack my enamel: / let the rust in.” (3-4). The text seems to imply that it is better to potentially gain “rust” through change rather than just standing still. The narrative of V and VI is a feeling of circular motion, rather than forward motion. Both speak metaphorically about wind and its circular or non-directional nature. The character’s metamorphosis is at a standstill. In VII, the character again acknowledges her yearning for change with the return of the text from “Utensil”, but in this reprise, it has been fragmented by another poem that is circular in nature: “Birds are flowers flying / and flowers perched birds.” (1-2). The final movement is characterized by a frenzy of text and rapid declamation, building to a climax. The coda of the movement reflects a return to calmness, whether or not the metamorphosis is truly complete with the lines from “Sphere”: “A warm unity, separable but / entire, / you the nucleus / possessing that universe.” (26-29).
The Transmutation of the Immutable Abyss

I. Prologue

Flute, Piccolo

Oboe, English Horn

Clarinet in Bb

Trumpet in Bb, Flugelhorn in Bb (Straight Mute, Harmon, Cup Mute)

Trombone, (Straight Mute, Bucket, Cup Mute)

Voice

Piano

Percussion 1
  Bass Drum, Glockenspiel, Chimes, Suspended Cymbal, Claves, Guiro, Tambourine

Percussion 2
  Suspended Cymbal, Snare Drum, Triangle, Crotales

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

With Apprehension  = 80

Flugelhorn in Bb (Straight Mute, Harmon, Cup Mute)

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Violently $q = 120$

Bass Drum
To Glock.

Suspended Cymbal
To Snare

pizz.

fl.

ob.

b♭ cl.

b♭ tpt.

tbn.

voice

pno.

perc.

perc.

vln. i

vln. ii

vla.

vc.

d.b.

6 7 8 9 10
Fl. \( \text{ accel.} \)

Ob.

B-Cl.

B- Tpt.

Tbn.

Voice

Pno.

Perc.

To Glock.

Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.
Violently $\frac{\text{crotchet}}{4} = 120$

To Piccolo
With Quiet Resignation  \( \frac{\text{d} \text{m}}{=40} \)  

II. Songlet  \( \text{F} \)
un - du - ly un - do - ing, Kiss - es us a - wake in - to the
new world and leaves us pre-
Fl.

Ob.

B-Cl.

B-Tpt.

Tbn.

Voice

emp ted and unst ead y ob.

Pno.

Trgl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.
here we go, we say, another adjustment as usual:

(spoken)
appears to be the leader here: we turn to...
where a beam forms and set
### III. Reflective

**Fl.**

**Ob.**

**B♭ Cl.**

**B♭ Tpt.**

**Tbn.**

**Voice**

**Pno.**

**Trgl.**

**Vln. I**

**Vln. II**

**Vla.**

**Vc.**

**D.B.**

*Reflective* $\dot{\frac{\text{b}}{\text{f}}} = 80$

*To Claves* $\dot{\frac{\text{b}}{\text{f}}}$

*Triangle* $\dot{\frac{\text{b}}{\text{f}}}$

*Claves* $\dot{\frac{\text{b}}{\text{f}}}$

*pizz.* $\dot{\frac{\text{b}}{\text{f}}}$
I found a weed that had a mirror in it and that mirror
Fl.
Ob.
Bs-Cl.
B- Tpt.
Tbn.
Voice
Pno.
Clv.
Trgl.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

130 131 132 133 134

looked in at a mirror in me that had a weed in it
IV. Utensil

Serene 4 = 100

- B: Fl.
- B: Ob.
- B: Bb Cl.
- B: Bb Tpt.
- Tbn.
- Voice
- Pno.
- Gro.
- Triangle
- Vln. I
- Vln. II
- Vla.
- Vc.
- D.B.

Notation and symbols as shown in the image with instrument names and their respective musical notations.
Fl.
Ob.
Bb Cl.
Bb Tpt.
Tbn.
Voice
Prays, crack my e- na-mel let the rust
Pno.
Gro.
Trgl.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

183 184 185 186
How does the pot pray:

Am, Dmaj7(#11)
wash me, so I gleam?

füll
Am    Dmaj7(F11)
prays, crack my enamel: let the rust

...
Mysterious $\frac{\text{L}}{\text{L}} = 60$

V. Small Song

Fl.

Eng. Horn

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

Voice

Pno.

Bass Drum

Triangle

Trgl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

$pp$ 228 229 230 231 232 233
The reeds give way to the wind.

Rub head with Superball mallet.

239 240 241 242 243 244

Regular mallets

\[\text{to the wind and give and give the wind away}\]
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
B♭ Tpt.
Tbn.
Voice
Pno.
Perc.
Trgl.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

rit.
attacca

251 252 253 254
VI. Hollows

Fl.

Ob.

B-Cl.

B-Tpt.

Tbn.

Voice

Pno.

Tamb.

Triangle

Trgl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Spritely $\frac{\d}{\d} = 100$

Eng. Horn

mp

mp

mp

mp

pizz.

pizz.

mp

255  256  257
The whirlwind lifts
ho-ly spun  emp-ti-ness
Fl.  
Ob.  
Bb Cl.  
Bb Tpt.  
Tbn.  
Voice  
Pno.  
Tamb.  
Trgl.  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vla.  
Vc.  
D.B.  

\textit{rit.} \hspace{1cm} \boxed{V} \hspace{1cm} \text{Agitated} \quad \underline{\text{d} = 152} \hspace{1cm} \text{÷} \hspace{1cm} 275 \hspace{1cm} 276 \hspace{1cm} 277 \hspace{1cm} 278 \hspace{1cm} 279 \hspace{1cm} 280 \hspace{1cm} 281
With Building Tension $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{t}} = 100$

VII. Utensil Reprise/Mirrorment

Fl.  
Oboe  
Bb Cl.  
Bb Tpt.  
Tbn.  
Voice  
Pno.  
Bass Drum  
Triangle  
Perc.  
Pizz.  
Vln. I  
Pizz.  
Vln. II  
Pizz.  
Vla.  
Pizz.  
Vc.  
D.B.  
Cmaj7(B11)  
Gm  
Cmaj7(B11)  
Gm

Cm7(V7)  
Db7(V7)  
Gm  
Cmaj7(B11)  
Gm
How does the pot pray?

Birds are flowers flying

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.
Fl.
Ob.
Bb Cl.
Bb Tpt.
Tbn.
Voice
Pno.
Perc.
Trgl.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

wash me,
so I gleam? and flowers

314
315
316
317
prays, perched birds crack my enamel: let the rust in.
Serene $\frac{1}{2} = 80$

VIII. Sphere, Come Prima, Sphere

[Music notation]

Fl. [Piccolo]

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

Voice

in the dark original water, amniotic infinity closed

Pno.

Chm.

Trgl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

323 324 325 326 327 328
Allegro $\Rightarrow \quad d = 132$

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

Voice

will forming to become consistency of motion a

Pno.

Chm.

Trgl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.
With Quiet Resignation  \( \dot{=} 40 \)

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn.

Voice

Pno.

Chm.

Tgl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

357  358  359  360  361
fo reign and far away your death, ri vu

To Crotales
lets tri-k-ling through ripe bowels,
To Oboe

To Trumpet

"turn to heav-y wa-ter, in-fi-nite mul-ti-pli-ci-ty, in the"

Crotales
Bowed Freely

p
With Building Tension $\cdot = 80$

deepening
time
ear
then
womb
that
bears
you
ever
beyond
the
am-ni-on

Fl.
Ob.
B-Cl.
B-Tpt.
Tbn.
Voice
Pno.
Chimes
Crt.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.

With Building Tension $\cdot = 80$

deepening
time
ear
then
womb
that
bears
you
ever
beyond
the
am-ni-on

Fl.
Ob.
B-Cl.
B-Tpt.
Tbn.
Voice
Pno.
Chimes
Crt.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.
I know there is perfection in the being of my being, that I am holy in amness as stars or paperclips, that the universe, moving from void to void, pours in and out through me:

I know there is perfection in the being of my being, that I am holy in amness as stars or paperclips, that the universe, moving from void to void, pours in and out through me:
there is a point, only itself, that fills space, an emptiness that is plenitude:

Spoken

a void that is all being,

Spoken
Violently \( \frac{1}{2} = 120 \)

Bass Drum

Perc.

Trgl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

\( f \)

\( f \)

\( f \)

\( f \)
Serene $\bullet = 80$

A warm u-ni-ty, se-pa-ra-ble but en-ti-re,
that universe.
Bibliography


APPENDIX A: Text

Text as appears in the composition (Parentheses around italicized text denote repetition, Brackets denote the insertion of one poem into another, and a line indicates a separation between movements/sections of the piece):

I. [Voice tacets]

II. Songlet

Death, unduly undoing,
kisses us awake into
the new world and leaves

us preempted and unsteady:
oh, here we go, we say,
another adjustment as usual:

light appears to be the leader
here: we turn to where
a beam forms and set out

III. Reflective

I found a
weed
that had a

mirror in it
and that
mirror

looked in at
a mirror
in

me that
had a
weed in it

IV. Utensil

How does the pot pray:
wash me, so I gleam?

prays, crack my enamel:
let the rust in.

(How does the pot pray:
wash me, so I gleam?)

prays, crack my enamel:
let the rust in.)

V. Small Song

The reeds give way to the wind (to the wind) and give (and give) the wind away

VI. Hollows

The whirlwind lifts sand into itself to hide holy spun emptiness or to erect a tall announcement where formed emptiness is to be found.

VII. Utensil Reprise/Mirrorment

How does the pot pray:
[Birds are flowers flying]
wash me, so I gleam?
[and flowers]
prays, [perched birds.]
crack my enamel:
let the rust in.

VIII. Sphere, Come Prima, Sphere

In the dark original water, amniotic infinity closed boundless in circularity:

tame, heavy
water,
equilibriant,

any will forming to become— consistency of motion arising— annihilated by its equal and opposite:

an even, complete extent:
(there
an eden: how

foreign and far away
your death, rivulets
    trickling through ripe bowels,

return to heavy water,
infinite multiplicity, in

the deepening, filtering
earthen womb
that bears you forever

    beyond
the amnion, O barrier!)

[I know
there is
perfection in the being
of my being,
that I am
holy in amness
as stars or
paperclips,

that the universe,
moving from void to void,
pours in and out through me:

there is a point,
only itself,
that fills space,
an emptiness that is plenitude:

a void that is all being,
a being that is void:

I am perfect:
that wind is perfect:
ditchwater, running, is perfect:
everything is:

I raise my hand]

A warm unity, separable but
    entire,
you the nucleus
possessing that universe.
APPENDIX B: Original Source Text

Songlet

Death, unduly undoing,
kisses us awake into
the new world and leaves

us preempted and unsteady:
oh, here we go, we say,
another adjustment as usual:

light appears to be the leader
here: we turn to where
a beam forms and set out

Reflective

I found a
weed
that had a

mirror in it
and that
mirror

looked in at
a mirror
in

me that
had a
weed in it

Utensil

How does the pot pray:
wash me, so I gleam?

prays, crack my enamel:
let the rust in.
Small Song

The reeds give
way to the
wind and give
the wind away

Hollows

The whirlwind lifts
sand into itself to hide

holy spun emptiness or to
erect a tall announcement

where formed
emptiness is to be found.

Mirrorment

Birds are flowers flying
and flowers perched birds.

Sphere

In the dark original water,
amniotic infinity
closed
boundless in circularity:

  tame, heavy
water,
equilibrant,

any will forming or to become—
consistency of motion
  arising—
annihilated
by its equal and opposite:

an even, complete extent:
  (there
an eden: how

foreign and far away
your death, rivulets
  trickling through ripe bowels,
return to heavy water,
infinite multiplicity, in

the deepening, filtering
earthen womb
that bears you forever

    beyond
the amnion, O barrier!)

A warm unity, separable but
entire,
you the nucleus
possessing that universe.

Come Prima

I know
there is
perfection in the being
of my being,
that I am
holy in amness
as stars or
paperclips,

    that the universe,
moving from void to void,
pours in and out through me:

    there is a point,
only itself,
that fills space,
an emptiness that is plenitude:

    a void that is all being,
a being that is void:

    I am perfect:
that wind is perfect:
ditchwater, running, is perfect:
everything is:

    I raise my hand
APPENDIX C: Movement V Matrix

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