

And the barriers had vanished

song cycle for soprano and violoncello

Dominick DiOrio



*Commissioned by and dedicated to
Justin Dougherty, violoncello, and Meredith Mecum, soprano*

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song cycle for soprano and violoncello

- I. Prelude
- II. And this is of a boy who sat in school
- III. Timarion
- IV. He asked about the quality
- V. Clifton and a Lad's Love
- VI. Alexis
- VII. Postlude: And the barriers had vanished

Texts by Edward Carpenter, Meleager,
C.P. Cavafy and John Addington Symonds

Duration: 25 minutes

Difficulty: 5

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This score can be found at GraphitePublishing.com

For more information about this work and others, please visit
www.dominickdiorio.com

Composer's Note:

The genesis of this project is remarkably serendipitous. Justin had been on the lookout for openly-gay composers who might be interested in writing works for his Queering the Pitch recital series. It just so happens that he found my website through a friend and felt compelled to write me an email to gauge my interest in the project. Inspired by the thought of writing a song cycle for soprano and violoncello, I responded quickly that I would be most delighted to do so!

“And the barriers had vanished” is an exploration of the many facets of love in hiding. The texts are diverse, drawn from a selection of poets whose words touch on themes of passion, coming-of-age, secrecy, forbidden desire, and exultation. The music is mostly my own, with the exception of the fifth song. There I borrow the entirety of the “Andante lento” from Benjamin Britten’s *Second Suite for Cello*, Op. 80, so that I may allow the text to draw parallels with Britten’s own internal conflicts. As with the Britten, I have recently been fascinated with the layering of new material over older musical material. I do the same thing to my own original music between the Prelude and the Postlude, where the soprano voice can no longer hold in her glee, but must interrupt the former violoncello solo to proclaim her joy.

The music is dedicated gratefully to Meredith and Justin.

-- Dominick DiOrio

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Music by Dominick DiOrio (b. 1984)

I. Prelude

II. "And this is of a boy who sat in school"

Edward Carpenter (1844-1929)

from 'A Mightier than Mammon' in "Towards Democracy" (1918)

And this is of a boy who sat in school.

The masters talked about Greek accident and quadratic equations, and the boys talked about lobs and byes and bases and goals; but of that which was nearest to his heart no one said a word.

It was laughed at - or left unspoken.

Yet when the boy stood near some of his comrades in the cricket-field or sat next them in school, he stock and stammered, because of some winged glorious thing which stood or sat between him and them.

And again the laughter came, because he had forgotten what he was doing; and he shrank into himself, and the walls round him grew, so that he was pent and lonely like a prisoner.

Till one day to him weeping, Love full-grown, all-glorious, pure, unashamed, unshackled, came like a god into his little cell, and swore to break the barriers.

And when the boy through his tears asked him how he would do that, Love answered not, but turning drew with his finger on the walls of the cell.

And as he drew, lo! beneath his finger sprang all forms of beauty, an endless host - outlines and colors of all that is, transfigured:

And, as he drew, the cell-walls widened - a new world rose - and folk came trooping in to gaze,

And the barriers had vanished.

III. Timarion

Meleager (1st century BCE)

from Poems of Meleager (1890) trs. Walter Headlam

Thine eyes are fire, Timarion,
thy kiss a liméd lure;
thou kindles whom thou look'st upon,
whom touchest, hast him sure.

IV. He Asked About the Quality

C.P. Cavafy (1863-1932)

He Asked About the Quality

He left the office where he'd been given
a trivial, poorly paid job
(something like eight pounds a month, including bonuses) —
left at the end of the dreary work
that kept him bent all afternoon,
came out at seven and walked off slowly,
idling his way down the street. Good-looking,
and interesting: showing as he did that he'd reached
his full sensual capacity.
He'd turned twenty-nine the month before.

He idled his way down the main street
and the poor side-streets that led to his home.

Passing in front of a small shop that sold
cheap and flimsy things for workers,
he saw a face inside, a figure
that compelled him to go in, and he pretended
he wanted to look at some colored handkerchiefs.

He asked about the quality of the handkerchiefs
and how much they cost, his voice choking,
almost silenced by desire.
And the answers came back in the same mood,
distracted, the voice hushed,
offering hidden consent.

They kept on talking about the merchandise —
but the only purpose: that their hands might touch
over the handkerchiefs, that their faces, their lips,
might move close together as though by chance —
a moment's meeting of limb against limb.

Quickly, secretly, so the shop owner sitting at the back
wouldn't realize what was going on.

V. Clifton and a Lad's Love

John Addington Symonds (1840-1893)

Clifton and a Lad's Love

This time it is no dream that stirs
The ancient fever of my brain:
The burning pulses throb again,
The thirst I may not quench recurs.

In vain I tell my beating heart
How poor and worthless were the prize:
The stifled wish within me dies,
But leaves me unextinguished smart.

It is not for the love of God
That I have done my soul this wrong
'Tis not to make my reason strong
Or curb the currents of my blood.

But sloth, and fear of man, and shame
Impose their limit on my bliss:
Else I had laid my lips to his,
And called him by love's dearest name.

VI. Alexis

Meleager (1st century BCE)

trs. Peter Whigham

At 12 o'clock in the afternoon
in the middle of the street -
Alexis.
Summer had all but brought the fruit
to its perilous end:
& the summer sun & that boy's look
did their work on me.
Night hid the sun.
Your face consumes my dreams.
Others feel sleep as feathered rest;
mine but in flame refigures
your image lit in me.

VII. Postlude: "And the barriers had vanished"

Edward Carpenter (1844-1929)

from 'A Mightier than Mammon' in "Towards Democracy" (1918)

Wonderful, beautiful, the Soul that knits the Body's life passed in,
And the barriers had vanished.

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I. Prelude

Dominick DiOrio

Freely and with virtuosic flair, approx. ♩ = 60

Violoncello

mf *mf*

Vc.

f *p* *espressivo* *f*

Vc.

f

Vc.

ff *fp* *p* *6* *3* *6* *ord* *ff* *attacca* *sul ponticello*

December 23, 2011
Long Island, NY

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II. "And this is of a boy who sat in school"

Edward Carpenter (1844-1929)

from 'A Mightier than Mammon' in "Towards Democracy" (1918)

Dominick DiOrio (b. 1984)

Quickly moving ♩ = 156

Soprano

Violoncello

p *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

7

S. And this is of a boy who sat in

Vc. *p* *f* *mp*

13

S. school. And this is of a boy who sat in school. The

Vc. *f*

20

S. mas - ters talked a - bout Greek ac - ci - dence. The mas - ters talked a - bout Greek ac - ci - dence

Vc.

26

S. — and qua - dra - tic e - qua - tions, — and qua - dra - tic e - qua - tions, —

Vc.

32

S. — and the boys talked — a - bout lobs and

Vc.

fp ————— *f*

38

S. byes and bas - es and goals; lobs and byes and bas - es and goals; —

Vc.

mp

44

S. — but of that which — was near - est to his heart no one said a

Vc.

f ————— *pp*

51

S. *mf*
word. It was

Vc. *f* *p*

57

S. laughed at laughed

Vc. *mp* *mf*

63

S. *f* *p*
at or left un - spo - ken.

Vc. *f* *p* *mp*

70

S. *mp*
Yet when the boy stood near some of his com-rades in the

Vc.

76

S. *mf*
cric-ket field or sat next to them in school, he stocked and stam-mered be-cause of some

Vc.

81

S. wing - ed glor - ious thing_ which stood_ or sat_ be - tween him and

Vc.

87

S. them._____ and a - gain the laugh - - -

Vc.

93

S. - ter, laugh - - - - - ter *f*

Vc. *mf* *f*

molto rall. . . . A tad slower ♩ = 138

99

S. the laugh - ter came,_____ and a - gain the *f*

Vc. *ff* *f* *mp*

105

S. *mp* oblivious, as bell-tones

laugh - ter _____ came, _____ be - cause he _____ had for - got - ten

Vc. *p*

113

S. *mp*

what he was do - ing; _____ and he _____ shrank

Vc. *mp* *pp*

121

S. *p*

in - to _____ him - self, _____ and the _____ walls round him _____ grew

Vc. *mp* *pp*

129

S. *pp*

so that _____ he was pent _____ and lone - ly _____ like a pri - so -

Vc. *ppp*

140

Slowly ♩ = 52

mf

molto accel.

S. *ner.* Till _____ one day _____ to him weep-ing, Love _____ full-grown, all

Vc. *niente* *mf*

149

Tempo I ♩ = 156

S. glor-ious, pure, _____ un-a-shamed, unshack-led, _____ came like a god _____

Vc. *f* *p* *f*

156

S. in - to his lit - tle cell, and swore to break the bar-ri-ers. And

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

162

S. when the boy, and when the boy, when the boy, when the boy through

Vc. *f* *mp* *f*

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C. P. Cavafy (1863-1932)

IV. He Asked About the Quality

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Recitative/chanting-tones, *molto rubato* ♩ = 60

Soprano

Violoncello

sul ponticello *pizz* *sul ponticello arco* *pizz*

p *f* *p* *p* *f* *p*

4

S. He left the office where he'd been given a trivial, poorly paid job (something like eight pounds a month, including bonuses)--

Vc. Left at the end of the dreary work that kept him bent all afternoon, came out at seven and walked off slowly, idling his way down the street.

6

S. Good - look - ing, and in - ter - est - ing:— showing as he did that he'd reached his

Vc. *sul ponticello arco* *mp < f* *mp* *f* *p*

8

S. full sen - su - al ca - pa - ci - ty. He'd turned twen-ty-nine the month be

Vc. *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *ord -----> s. p.*

Walking-tempo ♩ = 60

11

S. fore. He

Vc. *sul ponticello arco* *pizz*

p *f* *ff* *mp*

14

S. id-led his way down the main street and the poor side streets that

Vc.

18

S. led to his home. Pass-ing in front of a small shop that sold

Vc.

21

S. cheap and flim-sy things for work-ers, he saw a face in -

Vc. *arco* *f*

24

S. side, a fi-gure that com-pelled him to go in, And he pre-tend-ed he want-ed to

Vc. *mp*