

Rough Beast  
TTBB, percussion

Timothy C. Takach

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# Timothy C. Takach

## Rough Beast

for TTBB choir and percussion  
(bongos, 3 concert toms, bass drum, gourd shaker)

Commissioned by the Miami University Men's Glee Club, Jeremy D. Jones, conductor  
Premiered at the 2014 ACDA Central Division Conference

## Text:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;  
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.  
The Second Coming!

Hardly are those words out  
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*  
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert  
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,  
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,  
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it  
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again; but now I know  
That twenty centuries of stony sleep  
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle  
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?  
- *William Butler Yeats, 1919*

## Percussion 1

Bongos with hard mallets

## Percussion 2

3 concert toms

## Percussion 3

Concert bass drum

## Note:

I had “The Second Coming” on my list of poems to set for over a decade. I was afraid to set it, since it is such a well-known poem, and also I had heard Joni Mitchell do a gripping version on her “Travelogue” album that was awesome and fully orchestrated. But when Jeremy and I were discussing texts I had to throw this one in the mix because it’s such a great fit for men’s voices.

I love the images Yeats calls forth, whether they’re read as biblical, apocalyptic or war-inspired metaphor. I think the sci-fi nut in me kind of wants this beast to exist somewhere. I suppose it does, within this words of the poem and the notes of this piece. However you interpret this poem, one thing that is true across all meanings is a confrontation of the profane with the sacred. A world falling apart. The loss of morality and responsibility. The poisoning of a Christian dogma. The coming of a beast.

I didn’t listen to Joni Mitchell’s version for years so that one day, if I did end up setting this poem, I wouldn’t be too strongly influenced. Now I can stop skipping that track.

## Instrumentation:

Although originally scored for male choir and percussion, this piece is also successful when done a cappella. If you perform it without the percussion, m. 4 and 6 should both be 2/4 bars, keeping the eighth note pick up in m. 6 the same.

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# Rough Beast

for TTBB and percussion

W. B. Yeats

$\text{♩} = 80$

Timothy C. Takach

Tenor

Bass

Percussion 1  
Bongos

Percussion 2 and 3  
Toms  
B. Dr. and Shaker

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Turn - ing and turn - ing

Turn - ing and turn - ing

*mf*

*mf*

4

T

B

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

in the wide - ning gyre — The

in the wide - ning gyre — The

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*mf* toms: low, mid, high

*mf* bass dr.

*p*

*p*

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7

T fal - con can-not hear the fal - con - er; Things fall a - part; the

B fal - con can-not hear the fal - con - er; Things fall a - part; the

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

*mf*

*mf*

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10

T cen - tre can - not hold; Mere an - ar - chy is

B cen - tre can - not hold; Mere an - ar - chy is

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

*f*

*mf*

*mp*

*p muted*

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13

T loosed up - on the world, The blood-dimmed tide is loosed,

B loosed up - on the world, The blood-dimmed tide is loosed,

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

*f*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

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**A**

*mp legato*

*p*

16

and eve - ry - where \_\_\_\_\_ and eve - ry - where \_\_\_\_\_ and eve - ry - where \_\_\_\_\_ and

T

B

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

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19

eve - ry - where

*mp* The best lack all con - vic - tion,

T

B

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

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**B**

$\text{♩} = 88$

22

worst Are full of pas - sion - ate in - ten - si - ty \_\_\_\_\_ Sure - ly some rev - e -

T

B

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

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unmuted

shaker

26

T  
la - tion is at hand; some rev - e - la - tion, some some rev - e - la - tion —

B  
la - tion is at hand; some — rev - e - la - tion —

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

29

T  
— Sure - ly the Sec - ond Com - ing is at hand. The Sec - ond Com - ing! The

B  
— Sure - ly the Sec - ond Com - ing is at hand. The Sec - ond Com - ing! The

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

32

T  
Sec - ond Com - ing! Sure - ly some rev - e - la - tion is at hand;

B  
Sec - ond Com - ing! Sure - ly some rev - e - la - tion is at hand; —

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

35

T  
some rev - e - la - tion, some some rev - e - la tion Sure - ly the Sec - ond

B  
some rev - e - la - tion Sure - ly the Sec - ond

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

*f* *ff*

38

T  
Com - ing is at hand. The Sec - ond Com - ing! The Sec - ond Com - ing!

B  
Com - ing is at hand. The Sec - ond Com - ing! The Sec - ond Com - ing!

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

blurred diction **C**

41

T  
*p* The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond

B  
*p* The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond Com - ing,

Perc. 1  
Hard - ly are those

Perc. 2, 3

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mf* *p*

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45 Com - ing, — The Sec - ond Com - ing, — The Sec - ond Com - ing, — The Sec - ond

T  
The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond Com - ing,

B  
words — out When a vast im age out of Spi - ri - tus Mun - di —

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

48 Com - ing, — The Sec - ond Com - ing, — The Sec - ond Com - ing, — The Sec - ond

T  
The Sec - ond Com - ing, — The Sec - ond Com - ing, The Sec - ond Com - ing,

B  
*mf* *f* *p* *poco a poco cresc.*

Perc. 1  
Trou - bles my sight: some - where in — sands — of the

Perc. 2, 3

51 Com - ing, — The Sec - ond Com - ing, — the head of a

T  
The Sec - ond Com - ing, and the head of a

B  
*mp*

Perc. 1  
de - sert A shape with li - on bod - y and the head of a

Perc. 2, 3

53 *mf*  
T man,  
man, A gaze blank and pit-i-less as the sun, Is  
B *mf*  
man, gaze blank and pit-i-less as the sun, Is  
Perc. 1  
Perc. 2, 3 *mp* *mf*

56 *legato*  
T mov - ing its slow thighs, while all a - bout it  
B *legato*  
mov - ing its slow thighs, while all a - bout it  
Perc. 1 *mf*  
Perc. 2, 3 *f*

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59 *mf*

T Reel — shad - ows of the in - dig - nant de - sert birds. Ah!

B1 *mp* Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!

B2 *mf* Reel shad - ows of the in - dig - nant de - sert birds. Ah!

B3 *mf* Ah!

Perc. 1 *mp* *mf* *p*

Perc. 2, 3 *mp* *pp*

**D**

T *f* *f* *f* *p* Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!

B *mf* *p*

B *f* *p* Ah! Ah!

Perc. 1 *f*

Perc. 2, 3 *f* *f*

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69 E = 80

T *mp* Ah! Ah! Ah! *p* lyrical The dark-ness drops a -

B *pp*

B *mp* Nn... *p* lyrical The dark-ness drops a -

Perc. 1 *pp*

Perc. 2, 3 *p*

73

T gain; but now I know That twen-ty cen-tu-ries of ston-y sleep

B gain; but now I know That twen-ty cen-tu-ries of ston-y sleep

B Nn... Nn...

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

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77

T  
— Were vexed to night - mare by a rock - ing cra - dle cra - dle

B  
Were vexed to night - mare by a rock - ing cra - dle

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

80

T  
*f* And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, — *ff*

B  
*f* And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, — *ff*

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

**F**

T  
*p* Slouch - es towards — Beth - le - hem — to be born? *mp* What rough beast

B  
*p* Slouch - es towards Beth - le - hem — to be born? *mp*

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

88

T *mf*  
Slouch - es towards Beth - le - hem to be born?

B *mf*  
Slouch - es towards Beth - le - hem to be born?

Perc. 1 *mp*

Perc. 2, 3 *mp*

91

T *f*  
What rough beast Slouch - es towards Beth - le - hem to be

B *f*  
What rough beast Slouch - es towards Beth - le - hem to be

Perc. 1 *mf*

Perc. 2, 3 *mf*

94

T *ff*  
born? Turn - ing and turn - ing and turn - ing Slouch - es towards

B *ff*  
born? Turn - ing and turn - ing and turn - ing Slouch - es towards

Perc. 1 *f*

Perc. 2, 3 *f*

97

T  
Beth - le - hem to be born? Turn - ing and

B  
Beth - le - hem to be born? Turn - ing and

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

*ritard* ..... ♩ = 76

99

T  
turn - ing and turn - ing *mp*  
and turn - ing Slouch - es towards Beth - le - hem

B  
turn - ing and turn - ing *mp*  
and turn - ing Slouch - es towards Beth - le - hem

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

*p*  
*pp*

102 *non ritard*

T  
to be born?

B  
to be born?

Perc. 1

Perc. 2, 3

*mf*

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Reviewed as “gorgeous” (Washington Post) and “stunning” (Lawrence Journal-World), the music of Timothy C. Takach has risen fast in the concert world. Applauded for his melodic lines and rich, intriguing harmonies, Takach has received commissions from the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, St. Olaf Band, Cantus, Pavia Winds, Lorelei Ensemble, VocalEssence, the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, The Rose Ensemble, and numerous other organizations. His compositions have been performed on A Prairie Home Companion, The Boston Pops holiday tour, multiple All-State and festival programs and at venues such as the Library of Congress, Kennedy Center and Royal Opera House Muscat. He is a co-creator of the theatrical production of All is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914, by Peter Rothstein.

Takach studied music composition at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, and has frequent national work as a composer-in-residence, presenter, clinician and lecturer. He is a full-time composer and lives in Minneapolis with his wife and two sons.

## Selected vocal works by Timothy C. Takach:

### Mixed Voices

A Worshipper and a Man		SATB a cappella
And I Saw		SATB div. a cappella
As the Sunflower Turns on Her God		SSAATBB div, Sop. solo, SSATB soli, a cappella
The Darkling Thrush	(earthsongs)	SATB, SAT soli, a cappella
Fragile		SATB, hand drum
Listen to the Apples		SATB div. a cappella
MOMENTS IN FILM: A Mural of Change		SATB, piano
MOMENTS IN FILM: Insidious		SATB, piano
MOMENTS IN FILM: Flying Solo		SATB, piano
Neither Angels, Nor Demons, Nor Powers	(Graphite Publishing)	SSATBB a cappella
Nubes Oriebatur: the eruption of Vesuvius		SSATBB a cappella
One Boy Told Me		SATB, piano
Ragnarök		SATB div. a cappella
Su Rahva Koda (The House of Your Kindred)		SSAATTBB a cappella
This Alien Landscape		SATB, crotales, suspended cymbal, bass drum
This Amazing Life		SA(T)B, piano

### Treble Voices

And I Saw		SSAA div. a cappella
Bahihii Waaliidkay Dhaqay		2-part, piano
Cassiopeia		SSA a cappella
Duende		SSAA, floor toms
How to Triumph Like a Girl	(Graphite Publishing)	SSA, piano
The Streets of Laredo (arr. American Folk Song)	(Graphite Publishing)	Unison, TTB, piano
There is No Rose	(Lorelei Ensemble)	SSAA, SS soli, a cappella
Torn Map	(Graphite Publishing)	SA, piano

### Men's Voices

Empty		TB (opt. div), piano, opt. djembe
Goodbye, Then		TBB choir, Bb clarinet, piano
I Will Howl		TBB choir, piano or cello
Kin		TB, piano
Luceat Eis		TTTBB a cappella
Mad		TB, piano
Original Harmony	(Colla Voce)	TTBB a cappella
Rough Beast		TTBB, percussion
Salve Regina	(Graphite Publishing)	TBB semi-chorus, TTBB a cappella
Things I Didn't Know I Loved	(Graphite Publishing)	TTBB a cappella

### Large Works

Helios (ca. 65')		SATB a cappella
The Longest Nights (ca. 21')		SATB, piano or string quartet
This is How You Love (ca. 35') composed with Jocelyn Hagen		SATB div. a cappella
True North (ca. 16')		SATB, chamber orchestra
We, the Unknown (ca. 40')		TTBB, soloists, chamber orchestra
Where Beauty Comes From (ca. 16')		TBB, 2-part, SSAA, SATB; piano