

Durations and Barcarolle

for clarinet and piano

Op. 15a

from *Songs to the Fair Youth: 6 Songs on Time's Passage*, Op. 15

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London: June 2024

ca. 7 mins

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Durations and Barcarolle are two instrumental movements, the seventh and the second respectively, taken from *Songs to the Fair Youth: 6 Songs on Time's Passage*. It is part of the composer's project to set the complete Shakespeare's sonnets into song cycles.

Durations initially pays homage to the sound world of Morton Feldman but employs newer temporal notations than those in his works of the same name. The movement traces the relative perception of the passage of time as a person grows in age: the fabric of time in the piano part feels more static as the clarinet opens with motifs representing youth and beauty, but gradually gains momentum as they morph into that of old age against a constantly flowing harmonic progression that foreshadows the more ominous barcarolle. The boat depicted in Barcarolle is probably closer to that of Charon and carries the sobering thought of the mortality of everything beautiful, including loved ones. The characteristic bell chimes persistently haunt the piece and, towards the end, sink into the horizon and become the primal pulse of tides and, by extension, the inevitability of nature's law.

The work was premiered by clarinetist Lai Tsoi Yin and pianist Kelvin Chan in the Recital Hall of Hong Kong City Hall on 26th July 2024.

Instrumentation: B \flat clarinet and piano

Performance directions:



Align parts, with cue given in the arrow's direction.



Play as quickly as possible.



Repeat boxed segment up to the end of the beam.

I. Durations

alignment between parts should be approximate unless otherwise specified by arrows

Clarinet (B \flat)

X

ppp sotto voce e non espressivo

Piano

X

X

15"

8"

Ped. →

=

2"

3"

(8")

20"

3

between [3] and [4]:

visual alignment between parts does not imply temporal alignment
each slur lasts for approximately 15"

↑

mf *poco*

between [3] and [4]: visual alignment between parts does not imply temporal alignment

(8va)

2"-5"

pp

8va

(12")

==

p

(8va)

2"-5"

(8va)

==

mf *poco*

(8va)

2"-5"

(8va)

poco a poco cresc.

II. Barcarolle

Adagietto ♩. = 44

Clarinet
(B♭)

Clarinet (B♭) staff: Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a single measure with a whole note, followed by a series of measures with half notes and quarter notes, all under a long slur. The dynamic marking *ppp* is present.

Adagietto ♩. = 44

ppp *sempre*
8va

Piano

Piano staff: Treble and Bass clefs, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a series of measures with chords and single notes. The dynamic marking *pp* is present. The instruction "col Ped." is written below the staff.



5

Clarinet (B♭) staff: Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a series of measures with half notes and quarter notes, all under a long slur. The dynamic marking *f* is present, followed by a crescendo leading to *p*. The instruction "ten." is written above the staff.

Piano staff: Treble and Bass clefs, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a series of measures with chords and single notes. The dynamic marking *f* is present, followed by a crescendo leading to *p*. The instruction "ten." is written above the staff.



Clarinet (B♭) staff: Treble clef, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a series of measures with half notes and quarter notes, all under a long slur. The dynamic marking *mf* is present, followed by a crescendo leading to *p*.

Piano staff: Treble and Bass clefs, 8/8 time signature. The staff contains a series of measures with chords and single notes. The dynamic marking *mf* is present, followed by a crescendo leading to *p*.

10

49

mp *dim.* *pp*

(8va)

p



11

54

p *pp* *pppp*

poco *morendo al fine*

8va
8va
Ped.



59

p *pp*

(8va)
(8va)
(Ped.)