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Passage. [Original composition]

Sharpe, John Carlyle, M.M.

Rice University, 1989
RICE UNIVERSITY

PASSAGE

by

CARLYLE SHARPE

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF MUSIC

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

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Composer in Residence
Chairman

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Dr. George Burt
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Houston, Texas
April, 1989
ABSTRACT

P A S S A G E

for Soprano and Orchestra

Carlyle Sharpe

Passage for Soprano and Orchestra was first inspired by the poem "Crossing the Bar" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson in early October of 1987. Because this poem was discovered to be a favorite of my grandfather's just prior to his death, I found a particular attraction to it and realized almost immediately the impact such a work would make if set for soprano and orchestra. The actual work was begun on Passage in late August of 1988, and it is subsequently dedicated to the memory of my grandfather.

Passage consists of six main sections, a prelude and postlude. Each section is unified through the continual variation of one main motive as well as the chord progression from which the motive is derived. The main sections are shown below.

Section: Prelude A B C Orch. Interlude
Measures: 1 - 12 13-57 58-84 85-146 147-171

Section: B D Postlude
Measures: 172-194 195-257 258-278

The head of the motive consists of the notes G Ab Eb which are varied through different transpositions and combinations. Invariably this one motive is capable of
creating the different moods specified by the text through the orchestral variations of timbre and the imposition of rhythmic variations. The underpinning chord progression from which the motive is derived is based on a polychord. This polychord consists of the two chords (major and minor), which when stacked in thirds forms a minor thirteenth chord. However, almost every appearance of the progression is presented with the two chords, each spread over a tenth, intersecting to form a minor second as an interlocking point.

All of these elements are thus realized throughout the work through the use of ethereal textures and spacious orchestrations.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A particular note of gratitude should also be given to Jeanette Lombard and Gisele Ben-Dor. Ms. Lombard prepared the soprano part superbly and gave an exquisite performance in addition to Ms. Ben-Dor's thorough preparation and beautiful interpretation of the orchestral score. The Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra's enthusiasm towards the work was also greatly appreciated.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of my family for their support of my art and Stephen Bomgardner for his unerring support and faith in my creative abilities.
PASSAGE

for Soprano and Orchestra

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Duration: approx. 14'15"

Score in C:
  B flat clarinets
  F horns
  C trumpets
Crossing the Bar

Sunset and evening star,
    And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
    When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
    Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
    Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
    And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
    When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
    The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
    When I have crossed the bar.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON