

Far Across Lake Merritt

For Trumpet in B \flat , Horn in F, and Piano

by
Robert Denham

S.D.G.

Performance notes: performers should approach this piece with something of an improvisatory manner, much the same way as they would Copland's *Quiet City*. Although no notes are to be added, the rhythmic figures are not to sound "calculated" or "beated," but should ebb and flow over each other effortlessly. At times, as with the septuplets that occasionally appear in the solo parts, the performer may wish to stretch some of the notes so that they are longer. However, do notice the values of the tuplet notes; a 16th note quintuplet, for example, is meant to fit into a single beat, whereas an 8th note quintuplet stretches over two beats. Tempo markings are suggested, but are not the law; performers may ebb and flow as they feel led, although they should take care that the piece does not become segmented; there should be a natural flow throughout. The pianist should pedal liberally throughout the piece; a few pedal markings are given, but it is assumed that the pedal will be used to enrich the texture whenever possible. The trumpet player may wish to perform this piece on flugelhorn, and may also choose a different mute (harmon).

Program notes: My father was many things, but most were unknowable to me as his son. I knew he loved baseball with a passion, but he rarely had time to watch or play it. I knew he loved nature, especially trees, but I possess only a handful of memories where I was able to share time with him in the outdoors; he was just too busy. I knew he once rowed "eights" for the Golden Bears of UC Berkeley, and even tried out for the Olympic team, but I only remember twice seeing him in a racing shell. Sometimes, though, the fewer the memories the more poignant they are, and the more precious, as is the case with what I am about to share.

Jerome Denham helped found the Lake Merritt Rowing Club in 1961 along with other rowing enthusiasts such as legendary UC Berkeley rowing coach Ky Ebright. He lost touch with the sport for many years, but then in the last 20 or so years of his life he returned to rowing; he did this for the exercise, the camaraderie, the competition, and simply for the pride of being an oarsman. I accompanied my father to Lake Merritt to visit the institution he helped start and to watch him row. The "lake" is a tidal lagoon sitting in the heart of Oakland CA, and is surrounded by high-rise apartment and office buildings, as well as open park spaces. During my visit, I was especially struck by two things, and I have attempted to capture these in this piece.

The first thing is this: as with most expanses of water, there is a quiet sense of stillness that subtly contradicts the busy sounds of city life, especially as the sun is low in the sky and things start to slow down towards the end of the day. Water fowl settle in for the night, and the street lights come on, even though they are not quite needed yet. Such was the case on this occasion, and my father was out in a racing shell in the center of the lake. Whatever the crew was talking about as they sat there preparing to row (and they seemed to wait there for the longest time just conversing) was known to them and them alone; only an occasional echo of their conversation could be heard from shore. There is a comfort illustrated in this picture that offers protection from a world that continues moving at an ever more frantic pace; to me, this was a picture of "safety."

The second element was the rowing itself. There is much written about the bond between the members of a racing team; every person must literally pull his or her weight. Everybody in the boat must agree to row until the allotted time is finished. For one member to stop rowing in the midst of a session could be catastrophic, since one of the long oars could easily "catch a crab" and literally throw the rower into the air and out of the boat. And so, once started, the team continues as one organism, yielding mind and body over to the "brain of the boat," the coxswain. Up close, this is a highly aerobic activity, but seen from a distance, especially when a team "finds its swing," it looks effortless, smooth, and is a beautiful thing to watch especially when the water is smooth as glass. Time stands still, and regardless of the actual weather, it is warm.

Score

Far Across Lake Merritt

Robert Denham

Written for Jim and Kiirsi Johnson

Warm, serene, and free; echoes of distant sounds ♩ = 52~60

legato, lyrical (water fowl alternatively taking flight and landing)

Trumpet in B \flat

Horn in F

Piano

mp *sim.*

gently rocking (a boat at dock)

Ped. $\text{—}\wedge\text{—}$

B \flat Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

sim.

(A)

7

B \flat Tpt. *legato, lyrical*

Hn. *mp* *sim.*

Pno.

11

B \flat Tpt. *mf* *3 decresc.*

Hn. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

(B)

15

B \flat Tpt. *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

Hn. *mp*

Pno. *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

18

B♭ Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

cresc. poco a poco

21

B♭ Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

f

mp

f

decresc.

24

B♭ Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

rall.

mp

mf

p

C *a tempo*

6
26

Far Across Lake Merritt

molto accel.

B♭ Tpt. *gradually open- bend pitch up*

Hn. *sfz* *mf*

Pno. *mf*

(D) Rich, a tempo

B♭ Tpt. *molto rall.* *mf* *f* *rall.*

Hn. *f*

Pno. *f*

(E) Shimmering, ethereal; very free ♩ = ca. 72

Pno. *p* *accel.* *rall.*

a tempo

Far Across Lake Merritt

7

sim.

Pno.

Pno.

Pno.

Pno.

8

Far Across Lake Merritt

F Warm, expressive (as before)

B \flat Tpt. *mp* 5

Hn. *mp*

Pno. *mp* 3 3 3

52

B \flat Tpt. *sim.* 3

Hn. *sim.* 3

Pno. 3 3 3

55

G

B \flat Tpt. *cresc. poco a poco*

Hn. 3 *cresc. poco a poco*

Pno. 3 3 5 5 *cresc. poco a poco* 3

Far Across Lake Merritt

57

B \flat Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

cresc. poco a poco

3

5

3

3

3

59

B \flat Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

f

f

f

3

3

3

61

B \flat Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

molto rall.

decresc.

p

3

3

3

3

(H) Ripples from a distant boat ♩ = 60

63

Pno.

Measures 63-65 of the piano part. Measure 63 features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 5-measure rest in the bass clef. Measure 64 continues the treble line with a 3-measure rest in the bass. Measure 65 concludes the phrase with a 3-measure rest in the bass.

66 *tenderly*

B♭ Tpt.

mp

Hn.

tenderly

mp

Pno.

p

Measures 66-68 for B♭ Trumpet, Horn, and Piano. Measures 66 and 67 are marked *tenderly* and *mp*. The B♭ Tpt. and Hn. parts feature melodic lines with triplets. The piano part (measures 66-67) has a 5-measure rest in the bass. Measure 68 is marked *p* and features a 5-measure rest in the bass and a triplet in the treble.

69

B♭ Tpt.

sim.

Hn.

sim.

Pno.

Measures 69-71 for B♭ Trumpet, Horn, and Piano. Measures 69 and 70 are marked *sim.*. The B♭ Tpt. and Hn. parts feature melodic lines with triplets. The piano part (measures 69-70) has a 5-measure rest in the bass. Measure 71 features a 7-measure rest in the bass.

72

B \flat Tpt. *p* *n.*

Hn. *p* *n.*

Pno. *7* *3* *3*

I *Less metered, free*

B \flat Tpt. *mp*

Hn. *mp*

J *Disturbed, flustered*

76

B \flat Tpt. *mf* *p* *mf*

Hn. *mf* *mf*

Pno. *sfz*

Far Across Lake Merritt

87 *rich, warm*

B \flat Tpt. *mp* *rich, warm*

Hn. *mp*

Pno. *sim.*

89

B \flat Tpt. *sfz*

Hn. *f* *gradually open*

Pno.

91

B \flat Tpt. *mp*

Hn. *mp*

Pno.

B \flat Tpt.
Hn.
Pno.

Measures 93-96. B \flat Tpt. and Hn. parts play a melodic line starting on a whole note, marked *p* and *n.* with a crescendo hairpin. The Pno. part features a complex texture with triplets in both hands and a fermata over the final measure.

(L)
B \flat Tpt.
Hn.
Pno.

Measures 97-100. B \flat Tpt. and Hn. parts play a melodic line starting on a half note, marked *mp*. The Pno. part features a complex texture with triplets in both hands and a fermata over the final measure. A circled 'L' is present above the first measure.

B \flat Tpt.
Hn.
Pno.

Measures 101-104. B \flat Tpt. and Hn. parts play a melodic line starting on a half note, marked *mf*. The Pno. part features a complex texture with triplets in both hands and a fermata over the final measure. A circled 'L' is present above the first measure.

99

B \flat Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

101

Hn.

Pno.

decresc. poco a poco

mp

(bend)

5

4

4

3

3

3

3

104

B \flat Tpt.

Hn.

Pno.

becoming more faint with each pull of the oar

mp

becoming more faint with each pull of the oar

mp

9

10

3

3

3

3

Far Across Lake Merritt

16
106

B \flat Tpt. *decresc. poco a poco*

Hn. *decresc. poco a poco*

Pno. *decresc. poco a poco*

109

B \flat Tpt. *p*

Hn. *p*

Pno. *p* *cresc.*

(N) Hushed; fog horns and city noise ♩ = 60~72

112

Hn. *muted*

Pno. *mf* *p* *sfz*

Far Across Lake Merritt

115

B \flat Tpt. *straight mute*

Hn.

Pno. *sim.*

mf

sfz

5

118

B \flat Tpt.

Hn. *mf*

Pno. *mf* *p*

mf *decresc.*

3

3

5

121

B \flat Tpt. *n.*

Hn. *mp*

Pno. *mp* *no longer rolled* *mf*

7

3

3



B \flat Tpt. *mf*

Hn. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

6

11

126

B \flat Tpt. *mf* *decresc.*

Hn. *mf* *decresc.*

Pno. *mf* *decresc.*

3

3

5

3

3

3

129

B \flat Tpt. *poco rall.* **P** *a tempo*

Hn. *poco rall.* **P** *a tempo*

Pno. *p* *3*

5

5

5

11

131 *poco rall.* *a tempo*

B \flat Tpt. *mp*

Hn. *mp*

Pno. *11* *3*

133 *rall.*

B \flat Tpt.

Hn.

Pno. *fade out to nothing* *12* *3*