

Mare Nostrum

For female folk singer and string quartet

Aileen Sweeney
Words: Martin Raymond

(2019)



Aileen
Sweeney

Our sea
Our water
Our sky
Our names
Our places
Our homes
Called out
Over the face of water
Under the blue sky
The salt water
The same water
All joined up
All one sea
All one ocean
All one

Martin Raymond

Programme Note

This piece was written in collaboration with writer Martin Raymond as part of Refugee Week held at Stirling University.

Displayed at the university is "The List" which traces information relating to the deaths of 34, 361

refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants who have lost their lives within, or on the borders of Europe since 1993.

Mare Nostrum, 'Our sea' in Latin was the Roman name for the Mediterranean. It is also the name of the Italian governments year-long operation in 2013 in response to unprecedented losses of refugee ships around the island of Lampedusa.

"The boat carrying almost 500 Eritreans and Somalis sank off Lampedusa in October 2013. Whether they had lost their identity papers or destroyed them, the people on board wanted to be known. As the boat listed and took on water, and with most of the women and children stuck below deck, those who knew they wouldn't make it called out their names and their villages, so that survivors might carry ashore news of their deaths."

Frances Stoner Saunders

The number, 34, 361, has been inscribed into the piece within the time signatures as a stark reminder of the vast and ever growing number of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants who have lost their lives.

Duration

c. 6' 30"

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Performance Directions

Singer:

The vocal part should be sung in a very folk like style. It should be sung with a very minimal, natural vibrato. Words should be clear but not be over-pronounced or brought out in an overly dramatic way. Traditional ornaments have been notated throughout. These are only a guide and ornaments should be placed where the singer naturally wants to place them. The ornaments should be almost ghosted. The vocal line should be sung very freely so only use the rhythms notated as a guide. Comma marks are used throughout the vocal part to show phrasing and very slight pauses/hesitations as opposed to showing breath marks. Cross head notation shows the few points where the words should be more "placed" and slightly spoken, however still with the pitch of the notated note.

String Quartet:

The use of demi-semiquavers box and arrows notation depicts a general shape that fill the length of the bar. The rhythm and order of the pitches can be very free so long as the general shape is followed. This should create a gentle, rippling arpeggiated effect. The resonance of any open strings should always be allowed to ring. Each instrument should play them at their own pace so that they don't align as such and chordal texture is created across the quartet. Cross head notation is used to indicate the "bow sound" created when playing on the bridge, with all four strings lightly dampened. There is no pitched sound. The hand should dampen the strings in the vicinity of the recently played pitches in order for the two sounds to segue into one and other. Differences in dynamics should be made with bow speed as opposed to bow pressure. Vibrato should be used sparingly throughout. At points "vibrato" has been marked where specifically a larger sound is needed.

Glissandos should be played slowly, lasting the whole duration of the note value in order for all microtones to be heard.

Col legno should be played with half wood, half hair. In reference to the notation of harmonics, the regular note shows where the note should be played and the diamond note shows which harmonic will be produced.

Arrows will be used to show when one technique should gradually move to another. In bar 38/39, violin 2 and the cellist should trill very quickly and lightly onto the harmonic written so that the two notes almost speak at once and create a chordal effect.

Sul Pont is abbreviated to S.P.

Sul Tasto is abbreviated to S.T.

Overpressure is abbreviated to O.P.

Mare Nostrum

Music by Aileen Sweeney
Words by Martin Raymond

Mezzo-soprano

Violin

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

$\text{♩} = 45$

Freely

Very gently fall towards downbeat.

p Delicate.

Pizz

mf < *f*

Norm.

Very gently fall towards downbeat.

Pizz

mf < *f*

Very gently fall towards downbeat.

Pizz

mf < *f*

Sim.

mf < *f*

Very gently fall towards downbeat.

Pizz

mf < *f*

Sim.

mf < *f*

Very gently fall towards downbeat.

Pizz

mf < *f*

Sim.

mf < *f*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for a piece titled 'Mare Nostrum' by Aileen Sweeney, with lyrics by Martin Raymond. It is marked '1' in the top left corner. The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 45. The piece is in 3/4 time and is marked 'Freely'. The instrumentation includes Mezzo-soprano, Violin (two parts), Viola, and Violoncello. The Mezzo-soprano part consists of rests in the first, second, and fourth measures. The Violin I part starts with a melodic line in the second measure, marked 'p' and 'Delicate.', with a performance instruction 'Very gently fall towards downbeat.' and a fingering diagram. The Violin II part starts with a pizzicato triplet in the second measure, marked 'mf < f', with a performance instruction 'Very gently fall towards downbeat.' and a fingering diagram. The Viola and Violoncello parts both start with a pizzicato triplet in the second measure, marked 'mf < f', with a performance instruction 'Very gently fall towards downbeat.' and a fingering diagram. The Viola part also includes a 'Sim.' (simile) marking in the fourth measure. The score concludes in the fourth measure with a 3/4 time signature.

3

M-S.

Vln.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

f

mp

mf

mf

mf

f

Sul Pont

Norm.

Arco

6/4

6/4

6/4

6/4

6/4

6/4

4

M-S.

Vln.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

f

ff

Cont.

Sul Pont

f

ff

Cont.

f

ff

Cont.

f

ff

6

mp

M-S. *Our* *Our*

Vln. - - - -

Vln. - - - -

Vla. *pp* Non Vibrato. Like a drone.

Vc. *pp* Non Vibrato. Like a drone.

M-S. *mf* *mp*

9

Our... Our... sea

Vln.

Vln.

Very gently and smoothly glissando.

Vla.

gliss. *p*

Vc.

11

M-S.

Our _____

Our _____

Vln.

Vln.

Vla.

Sul Pont.

Cont. Norm.

mp *pp*

Vc.

pp

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 11-14. It features four staves: M-S. (Mezzo-Soprano), Vln. (Violin), Vla. (Viola), and Vc. (Violoncello). The M-S. part has lyrics 'Our _____' and 'Our _____'. The Vln. and Vln. parts are silent. The Vla. part has a 'Sul Pont.' section in the first measure with a dynamic of *mp*, followed by a 'Cont.' section in the second measure with a dynamic of *pp*. The Vc. part starts with a dynamic of *pp*. The score is divided into four measures with time signatures 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, and 6/4.

58

M-S. *mp*

wa - ter All joined

Vln.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pages have been removed from this perusal score. If you would like to see the full score, feel free to get in touch on aileensweeney5@gmail.com