

SCORE

I Died in the Movies

Text by David Rodriguez

Music by Elizabeth Joan Kelly

a song cycle for:

Soprano

and

Pre-recorded electronics

- I. Before I Died in Jaws
- II. He Always Wanted a Pool
- III. Like Tears in Rain
- IV. The Wicked Witch of the West

I Died in the Movies

Text by David Rodriguez

I. Before I Died in Jaws

This place seems strange
And I know you will show me
What real anger is like
Am I just naive to think...

The sharks are floating,
The sharks are floating up for
me?

And with what you promised me
How could I decode?
Everything you wanted
That I would never do

III. Like Tears in Rain

Blushing, he asks me when
I had my memory, hoping to disprove
I've walked the earth
Longer than, say, popcorn minutes.

And I answer him, "I am old
Because I can point to my wrinkles,
Crow's feet and pictures
From our trip out to the city."

I have the scar where I cut myself
And scabs that bled today.
My father's cheapness, my mother's
obstinance.

And if that isn't true,
I can sing something new.

II. He Always Wanted a Pool

I am the shadow of my hunger in
Ohio
Stretched as far as the lamplight
But stopped at the wall
And breaking upwards and away.

IV. The Wicked Witch of the West

The madness of a prairie cold front
Or woodsmoke in the distance,
Or petals of poppies crumbling to ash.
While grim men lug emerald blocks
Enshadowed by the latticed spires
Growing up above.

But green as my skin grows
The ground is a'crackling
With poppies hiding black pits.
So I go to one.

Such softness around poison.
Green fingers tipped in blood.
The breeze tugs all the petals off
Before I break it at the stem
And I can see it without a crystal ball:

Running into the gray afternoon
The children of the suburb,
The zagging avenue,
The sleep that will overcome me
Sometimes called regret
Packed in the promise of progress.

With a flower in my hand
I run to my mother as fast as I can.

I Died in the Movies

Text by David Rodriguez
Music by Elizabeth Joan Kelly

Program Notes

In this song cycle, the texts, written by David Rodriguez, each concern a movie character who dies in some way connected to water: Chrissie from *Jaws* is attacked while swimming, Joe Gillis from *Sunset Boulevard* is shot and falls into a swimming pool, Roy Batty (a robot or “replicant”) from *Blade Runner* powers off as he sits in the rain after his internal body clock runs down, and the Wicked Witch of the West from *The Wizard of Oz* melts when Dorothy throws a bucket of water in her direction.

In each of these poems, Rodriguez has created a back-story, or alternative history, for the characters. For example, in the first song, Chrissie (who doesn't have any back-story in *Jaws*) desolately sings to a lover who has jilted her. It is unclear whether the lover is the young man in the film with whom she runs to the beach, or someone else; what is important is that just as Chrissie gives up on their love, she also gives up on life.

The second song involves a twenty-something Joe Gillis in his cubicle at the *Dayton Evening Post* (where Joe says he worked prior to moving to Hollywood, the place of his untimely demise at the hand of Norma Desmond). His song is a flashback to the days when he was still idealistic, living in his hometown and hearing the first whispers of a flashy and exciting world on the west coast calling to him.

In the third song, inspired by the movie *Blade Runner*, Roy Batty reacts in conversation to someone who is trying to tell him that he is a robot. In the film, it is Roy's unwillingness to accept his existence as a replicant that causes him to lash out at his creator and run amuck. Here the seed for his later destructive capacity is planted.

And finally, in the fourth song, though The Wicked Witch of the West has recently received her own alternative back-story thanks to Gregory Maguire's novel and the subsequent Broadway hit *Wicked*, Rodriguez creates a different explanation for her future behavior. In this song, the Witch sits in the poppy fields as a child, watching as laborers in the distance destroy the natural habitat of Oz in order to build the Emerald City. Seeing the future of Oz as a spiritless and insular suburb, she feels alienated towards the way her world is changing and runs away, resolving that if she can't be in total control, she must find a way to escape (which she later attempts by hunting down Dorothy and the red shoes).

David Rodriguez and Elizabeth Joan Kelly, March 5th 2006

To facilitate learning this piece, I have made a copy of the electronics with a simple piano sound playing the vocal line. This "dummy track" should be listened to and used in rehearsal for as long as the singer needs it.

-Elizabeth Joan Kelly

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I Died in the Movies

Before I Died in Jaws

Chrissie from *Jaws*

Text by David Rodriguez
Music by Elizabeth Joan Kelly

$\text{♩} = 70$ *Lethargically*

The musical score is divided into five systems. The first system includes a Soprano part and an Electronics part. The Soprano part is mostly rests. The Electronics part is in 4/4 time, marked *pp*, and features a complex, slow-moving melodic line with triplets and glissandos. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the Electronics part with more complex rhythmic patterns and glissandos. The third system (measures 10-13) shows the Electronics part with a glissando in the bass line and a triplet in the treble. The fourth system (measures 14-17) continues the Electronics part with a glissando in the bass line and a triplet in the treble. The fifth system (measures 21-24) introduces a Soprano part with the lyrics "This place seems strange" and continues the Electronics part with a glissando in the bass line and a triplet in the treble.

Soprano

Electronics

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

S

Elec.

pp

This place seems _____ strange _____

26 *pp* *f* *pp*

S And I know you will show _____ me _____

Elec.

31 *mf* *f*

S What real ang - er _____ is like.

Elec.

35 *subito p* *mp* *f* *mp*

S Am I just na - ive to think... The sharks are float - ing,

Elec.

39 *mp* *ff* *mp* *p* *pp*

S the sharks are float - ing _____ up _____ for me _____ , me _____ .

Elec.

Elec.

43

3

3

3

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for measures 43 through 47. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent changes in time signature (4/4, 7/8, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4). The music includes several triplet markings and a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes.

S

ff detached

48

And with what you promised me - , how could I de - code?

Elec.

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 48 through 52. The vocal line is marked *ff* detached. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4, then 4/4, 3/4, and finally 2/4.

S

legato
53 *subito p*

Evevery thing you want-ed - - - that I would nev-er do

Elec.

mf *pp*

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 53 through 57. The vocal line is marked *legato* and *subito p*. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent changes in time signature (4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4). The music includes several triplet markings and a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamic markings *mf* and *pp* are indicated above the piano part.

S

pp *f* *subito p*

58

Ever-y time that I thought all was you, _____ you.

Elec.

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 58 through 64. The vocal line is marked *pp* and *f* *subito p*. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent changes in time signature (4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4). The music includes several triplet markings and a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes.

Elec.

65

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for measures 65 through 69. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent changes in time signature (4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4). The music includes several triplet markings and a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes.

He Always Wanted a Pool

Joe Gillis from *Sunset Boulevard*

$\text{♩} = 150$ $\text{♪} = \text{♩}$
Harsh, driving

Soprano

Electronics

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

Elec.

Flowing and lyrical

Elec.

Elec.

Musical notation for Electric guitar, measures 51-54. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Measure 51 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass. Measure 52 continues the melodic line. Measure 53 shows a change in the bass line. Measure 54 concludes the system with a final chord in the bass.

Elec.

Musical notation for Electric guitar, measures 55-58. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Measure 55 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass. Measure 56 continues the melodic line. Measure 57 shows a change in the bass line. Measure 58 concludes the system with a final chord in the bass.

Pno.

Musical notation for Piano, measures 59-62. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Measure 59 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass. Measure 60 continues the melodic line. Measure 61 shows a change in the bass line. Measure 62 concludes the system with a final chord in the bass.

Pno.

Musical notation for Piano, measures 63-65. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Measure 63 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass. Measure 64 continues the melodic line. Measure 65 concludes the system with a final chord in the bass.

Pno.

Musical notation for Piano, measures 66-69. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Measure 66 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass. Measure 67 continues the melodic line. Measure 68 shows a change in the bass line. Measure 69 concludes the system with a final chord in the bass.

Pno.

Musical notation for Piano, measures 70-73. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Measure 70 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass. Measure 71 continues the melodic line. Measure 72 shows a change in the bass line. Measure 73 concludes the system with a final chord in the bass.

Pno.

73 *molto rit.*

Pno.

78 $\text{♩} = 60$
Gentle and delicate
ppp
8va

Pno.

84

Pno.

91

Pno.

98

105 *p*

S I am the shad-ow _____ of my hun - ger in Oh - i - o _____

Elec.

114 *f* *p* *p* *f* *p* *pp*

S Stretched as far as the lamplight Busted at the wall, And break-ing

Elec.

124 *mp* *mf* *f* *pp*

S up - wards _____ and a - way _____

Elec.

131

Elec.

Like Tears in Rain

Roy Batty from *Bladerunner*

Moderato ♩ = 100
Flowing, mechanical

Soprano

Electronics

Elec.

S

Blush - ing, he _____ asks me when _____ I had my me - mo - ry _____

Elec.

S *mp* *mf > mf > mf > mf >* *pp*

Hoping ___ to dis prove ___ I've walked the earth Long - er than, say, ___ pop - corn min utes

Elec.

Elec.

S *mp*

And I an - swer him, "I am ___ old, ___

Elec.

S

be - cause I can ___ point to my wrin - - kles, ___

Elec.

S ³⁹ *mf* > *mf* > *mf* > *mp* ³
crow's feet, and pic - tures — from our - trip — out to the ci - ty." —

Elec. ³⁹

Elec. ⁴⁴

S ⁵¹ *mp* ³ ³
I have the — scar — where I cut my - self — and scabthatbledto - day.

Elec. ⁵¹

S 57 My fath - er's cheap - ness, my moth - er's ob - sti - nance.

Elec.

S 61 And if that isn' t true, I can sing some thing new

Elec.

Elec. 65

Elec. 67

Elec. 71

The Wicked Witch of the West

Hurriedly ♩=160

from *The Wizard of Oz*

Soprano

p

The mad-ness of a prai-rie cold front Or wood smoke in the dis-tance,

Electronics

sfz

S.

mf *f* *p*

7 Or pet - als of popp - ies crumb - ling to ash

Elec.

S.

pp

13 While grim men lug emer - ald blocks

Elec.

S.

mf *f* *p*

17 En - shad-owed by the lat - ticed spires

Elec.

23 *ff*

S. *ff*
Grow - ing up a - bove.

Elec.

30 *p*

S. *p*
But green as my skin grows.

Elec.

37 *mp*

S. *mp*
The ground is a - crack - ling.

Elec.

44 *mf* *f*

S. *mf* *f*
with popp - ies hid - ing black pits.

Elec.

50 *ff*

S. So I go to one. —

Elec.

57 *Suddenly lethargic* ♩ = 60 *ppp*

S. Such soft - ness a - round — poi - son, Greenfingers tipped in blood.

Elec.

69 *Hurriedly* (♩ = 160)

Elec.

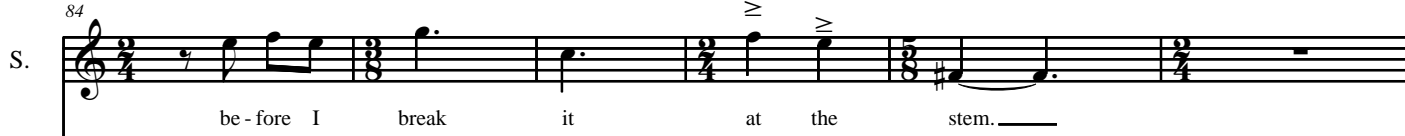
79 *mp*

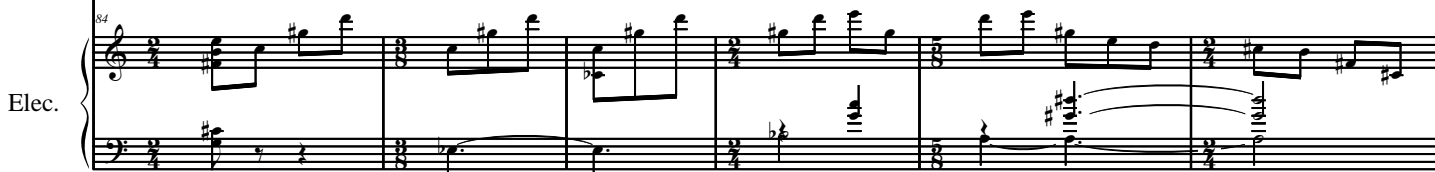
S. The breeze — tugs all — the pet - als off

Elec.

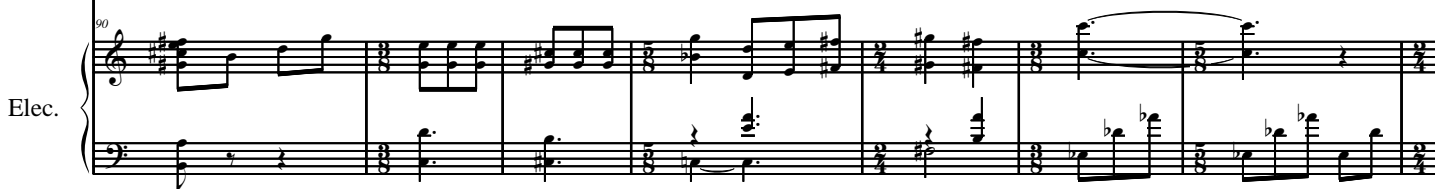
The Wicked Witch of the West

16

S.  *84* *>* *>*
be - fore I break it at the stem. _____

Elec. 

S. *f*
And I can see it _____ with-out a cry - stal ball: _____

Elec. 

Elec. 

S. *p* *mf*
Run - ning in - to the gray _____ aft - er - noon _____

Elec. 

S. *mp*
The child - ren of the

Elec. 

The Wicked Witch of the West

rit. ----- 17

119

S. *f*

sub - urb, the zag - ging av - - - e - - - nue,

Elec.

Suddenly lethargic ♩ = 60

129

S. *ppp* rit.

The sleep that will overcome me, some-times called regret, packed in the prom - ise of prog -

Elec. rit.

Hurriedly ♩ = 160

138

S. *p*

ress. With a flow - er in my hand

Elec.

144

S. *f* *ff*

I run to my moth - er as fast as I can.

Elec. Glissando