

Leviathan

A pocket opera

Music by Sunny Knable

On a playlet by Thornton Wilder

ca. 10 min

copyright 2013

Leviathan

Music by Sunny Knable

Based on a playlet by Thornton Wilder

Andante (♩=80)

(Sunrise after a night of storm, with the sea swaying prodigiously. A great Venetian argosy has been wrecked overnight; ships and men have disappeared, leaving only the cargo spread out upon the waters. Leviathan is hidden from audience. Prince is lying on ground. In the foreground, Mermaid is feeling her way among the stuffs with considerable distaste.)

Mermaid (soprano)

Leviathan (soprano)

Percussion (ocean drum, foot rattle, autoharp)

Prince (mezzo)

Violoncello

10 11

A - ve mar - is stel - la

ff *dim. poco a poco* (*f*) (*mf*)

mp

(*mp*)

(*mp*)

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for a scene titled 'Leviathan' by Sunny Knable, based on Thornton Wilder's playlet. It is in 9/8 time with a tempo of Andante (♩=80). The score features five vocal parts: Mermaid (soprano), Leviathan (soprano), Prince (mezzo), and two parts for Percussion (ocean drum, foot rattle, autoharp). The Violoncello part is also present. The lyrics for Leviathan are 'A - ve mar - is stel - la' and for Prince are 'A - ve mar - is stel - la'. The score includes various dynamics such as *ff*, *dim. poco a poco*, (*f*), (*mf*), and *mp*. There are also performance instructions like 'sul. pont.' and '9"'. The score is divided into measures, with a box highlighting measure 11.

14

L. *p*
A - - - ve mar - - -

Perc.

Vc. *(p)*

17

M. *(slightly offstage)* *p* *dolce*
Ah

L. *pp*
is stel - - la

Perc. *foot rattle*

Vc. *pp* *al niente* *sul tasto* *p*

20

4

molto meno mosso (♩=60)

(Mermaid "swims" onstage.)

(Suddenly she comes upon the Prince.
She watches him open-mouthed.)

29

a tempo (♩=80)

M. Ah _____ It's brea-thing. He has not lost what they call the

L. indeterminate whistle ("sea-gull" effect)

Perc. *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

Vc. I "sea-gull" effect *gliss. shss.* *sim. gliss.* *gliss.* *normale*
mp *p* *pp* *p* *mp*

M. soul. _____ I won-der where he keeps it. It is the great dif-frence be-tween us;

L.

Perc. *mp* *p* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

37 38 5

M. *mf* *f* *p*

we mer-maids have no soul. I won-der where he keeps it! I've

L.

Perc. *p*

Vc. *mf* *fp*

42

M. *4*

heard that it can be seen at times in the eyes. Per-haps if I took it from him, he would not miss it.

Vc. *2* *4* *2*

6

47

(Mermaid suddenly clasps her hands above her head and fixes her attention on the young man.)

M. *f* No, I will ask him for it. *p*

L. *pp* A - - - ve

Perc. ocean drum *pp* *p*

Vc. *ff* *sul pont.*

51

(Prince rises as if from a dream.)

L. *f* mar - - is (s)tel - la (s)tel - la *p*

Perc. *al niente*

Vc. *p* *sub. f* *p* *normale*

56

P. *f*
My fa - My fa-ther, take not... take not your hand a-way. My bro-thers,

Vc. *f* (*secco*)

65

L. *f*
A - ve mar - is (s)tel - la! stel - la!_

P. *ff*
why have you ceased to talk? Where am I?_ All is lost! A - ve mar - is (s)tel - la! stel - la!_

Vc. *ff* *sub. pont.* *normale* *sub. p*

66 (*Watching him intently.*)

M. *mp*
How could you sleep so_ dur-ing the storm?_

P. *f* *sub. p*
You - you are out of a dream.

Vc. *f* *sub. p*

a la Rossini's "Nessun maggior dolore"

autoharp Am slow strums sim.

71

Perc.

P.

Vc.

(The silence is filled with crackling noise as the pith fillings of the heavier cushions become saturated.)

77

Perc.

P.

Vc.

83 a tempo (♩.=80) (Harshly.)

M. *mf*
 Who is it you're call-ing to? There is no one here but you and me.

P. *mf*
 He does not an- swer:

Vc. *normale*
mf *p* *mf* *p*

87 rall. a tempo

L. *mf*
 A - ve mar - is (s)tel - la! stel - la!__

P. *p* *f*
 This is real.____ But you, you are a dream. A - ve mar-is(s)tel-la! stel - la!__

Vc. *sul pont.* *f*

10

92

(Indignantly.)

mf

M.

I am not a dream. I am roy-al a-mong all mer - maids.

Perc.

autoharp Am

Vc.

normale

sub. mf

mp

mf

p

96

101

(Vehemently.)

mf

M.

You

(Am)

G

C

E

Am

Perc.

cresc.

f

P.

mp

f

You are out of a bal - lad taught to me as a boy. You have come back to me in the tide of my fe - ver...

Vc.

f

102

M. *mf* think I am on-ly a dream be-cause you've heard it said we_ mer-maids have no souls._

Vc. *mf*

110

(More softly.)

M. *p* Tell me_ where it is you keep your soul._ Is it al-ways with you?_

L. *p* *whistle* *p* *mp* *p* *mf*

P. *mp* 8 Soul_ nor bo- dy._

Vc. *mp* *p*

113

M. *mf*

L. *mp* *mf* Who are you speak-ing to?

Flos un-da rum! Flos un-da rum! un-da - rum!

P. *mf* (As a great pillow floats away from under his hand.) *f*

Flos un-da- rum! Save me! De-li-ver me! Hear my pray'r!_____

Vc. *sul. pont.* *mf* *f* *normale*

119

117

M. Did I not tell you there was no one here but you and me?

P. *mf* You! Tell me where is shore. Draw me to land and I'll make you

Vc. *mf* *f*

(Clasp hands.)

122

M. *f* Give me your soul. Give me your soul.

P. *f*

Vc. *f* rich! *off the string* *pizz.* *arco*

125

M. *f* and I will draw you to your home. I have not lacked for an - y - thing else but a soul.

Vc. *f*

128

M. *mf*

P. *mf* And

Vc. *mf*

The soul can - not be giv - en a - way or seen or tast - ed.

131 **rall.** **a tempo** **rall.**

M. *sub. f* *cresc.* *molto*

Vc. *sub. f* *molto*

yet, they say that a life-with-out it is cold. You're mock-ing me! I see in your face that you have it!

optional double stops

135 **meno mosso** **137 a tempo**

M. *p*

P. *mf* *p*

Vc. *pp*

Give it to me and I will

Yes and am a- bout to lose it.

139

M. *4* *2* *2*

Vc. *4* *4* *4*

bring up from the bot- tom of the sea your fa- ther and bro - thers. I will re -

143 *poco* (Mermaid raises hands, water rises over Prince.)

M. turn to you all that has fal-len here and draw you soft-ly to Ve - nice...

L. autoharp

Perc. *p*

Vc. *poco* *p* *gradually to* *sul pont.* *cresc. poco a poco*

Am E G C Am E Am Ah

148 *p* *f* *f* *f*

M. Ah Ah

L. Ah

Perc. G Ah C E *f*

P. *f* *ff*

Vc. *(mp)* *(mf)* *f*

Lute play er! Wake... wake me out of this dream!

153

M.

A - ve mar - is stel - - la!

L.

A - ve mar - is stel - - la!

P.

A - ve mar - is stel - la!

Vc.

157

M.

L.

Perc.

ocean drum

P.

f
(Water closes over Prince. Lie back on floor.)

Vc.

cresc. *ff* (half-step trill) *tr* *tr* *tr* *sim.* *tr*

162 (Mermaid turns away from Prince contemptuously.) **164**

M. *mf* *f*
It is some - thing you can - not

Vc. *normale* *stacc.* *f* 4 4 4 2

167

M. *mf* *mp*
see. What could I do with it so? What could I

Vc. *mf* 2 2 *mp*

173

171 (The Prince rises, dead, entangled in scarves.)

M. *p*
do with it so? What could I do with it...

Vc. *p* *pp* *colegno tratto*

18

175

pp

mf

(Mermaid stares into his face long and earnestly.)

M.

L.

P.

Vc.

Oh

pp

mf

Oh

pp

mf

Oh

con l'arco

mf

182

p < *mf*

M.

It is true! There is some-thing gone — that lay a- bout his eyes, — that trou- bled... trou- bled his mouth. —

Vc.

p

191

(Clasp hands.)

f

(*f*)

molto

M.

The soul, — per haps.

Gog - e - tar!

Vc.

grotesque vibr. sul. pont.

molto <

p

(From a great distance, Leviathan swims toward her.)

194 *f*

197 *mp* 200

normale

There is no lon-ger an-y-thing prec-ious in this man. You may di-vide him a-mong your young.

sfz p *< f* *mp*

201 *mp* *mf*

It is ter-ri-ble here young la - dy. These spi-ces have mud-died the streams un-en-dur-a- ble.

205

By to - mor-row morn-ing the wa-ters will be taint-ed as far as Af-ri-ca.

209

L. Al - read - y my young are ill, la - dy. They lie mo - tion - less in the mud, dear

Vc.

L. ²¹⁴ la - dy. It is ter - ri - ble to see them so... *f*

Vc.

218

M. *f* I do not want to hear your trou - bles. *p* Take this man a - way *mf*

L. Thank you,

Vc. *p* *f* *p* *mf*

222

G.P.

226

21

M. *ff*

L. *Cease!* G.P.

Vc. *mp* *dim. poco a poco* *(p)* *p*

(Leviathan drags the Prince away.)

L. *mp* *dim. poco a poco* *(p)* *(pp)*

Vc. *mp* *sub. p* *dim.*

237

(Mermaid combs the shell out of her hair, singing.)

M. *p dolce* Ah Ah Ah

L. *al niente* whistle

Perc. *foot rattle*

Vc. *pp* *<mp>* *<p>*

22

245

non-vibr.
(Suddenly she breaks her song and adds musingly:)

M. *mp* *4*
Per-haps it is bet-ter, al-though your bo-dy has passed to Le vi-a-than, still to have a-no-ther part.

autoharp
G

Perc. *mp*

Vc. *pizz.*
mp

249

M. *vibr.* *3"* *3"* *3"*
— of you some-where a bout the world.

Perc. *C* *3"* *3"* *3"*
pp

Vc. *arco* *sul tasto* *2* *p* *3"* *col. bat.* *3"* *3"*
p *pp* *ppp*