

Kory Reeder

# How Little is Within

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For Voice and Orchestra

(2019)

## **General Considerations**

Always very quiet.

At times, the voice is leading, and at other times, the orchestra is leading. If there is a conductor, they will need to be open to navigating this situation in many ways, as it is not the point for the conductor to “lead” rather than work with and within the situation as all other members are.

## **Instrumentation**

The ensemble can be broadly described as an orchestra. This can be a proper orchestra (3.3.3.3-4.3.3.1, etc.), a chamber setting, or perhaps the minimal requirements: piano and percussion.

Percussion: a large collection of resonant metals that will allow for quiet rumbling effects (ie, tams, gongs, cymbals, etc.)

## **For the Voice**

Clearly, yet faintly, as you do.

Move slowly, take your time with each pitch. The rhythms are not regular, and may have some spaces in between.

Always above the orchestra.

● = Long

○ = Longer

“Tick-marks” indicate brief pauses, while rests indicate longer pauses.

## **For the Conductor if Needed**

Communicate between the flute, the orchestra, and yourself.

There’s not a single leader with this piece, but you are the one that is able to mix colors, and take the lead on some moments of timing.

## **For the Orchestra**

The orchestra is always under the voice.

In long tones, sometimes shorter.

Delicate, but alive and warm.

Performing the indicated pitches – choosing 1 or 2, sometimes more.

Increasingly smooth and connected.

Resonating and shimmering.

### Thoughts on the piece

What is the situation of the solo/concerto? Here, the situation is (in some way) about communication, but somehow also about pressure, idolatry, social structures, and social pressures. The soloist is the icon, or the idol, the role model with the ensemble their disciples. This metaphor might be the “ideal” romantic statement of the situation, but there is a balance or responsibility of ego. Is one leading, or is one being lead? Is this love, or is this social pressure? Are there cheers of support, or is this a crowd of unrealistic expectations? I don't think this piece provides any answers, but I do intend to ask those questions. In the preface of *Gorgeous Nothings*, Susan Howe says that “for Proust, a fragment is a morsel of time in its pure state; it hovers between a present that is immediate and a past that once had been present.” The text comes from Emily Dickinson's envelope poems. These small, personal fragments of poetry, thought, and emotion demonstrate a concise and eloquent approach to language; not only that, but they draw questions to the form as well. Is language poetry, who is it for, and who is listening?

### Text

A 438

To light, and then return |

A 277

That fondled them when they were fire | will stir gleam and understand |

A 394/394 a

Accept my timid happiness | no joy can be in vain | but adds to some bright | sweet | whose dwelling |

A 496/497

Gaze | For which | I cease to | live - |

A 252

In this short life | that only lasts an hour | merely | How much how | little is | within our | power |

Emily Dickinson  
1830 - 1886

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A277  
*pp*

Voice: That fon - del'd them when they were fire will stir gleam and un - der - stand

Orchestra: *A single pitch, Not all at once* *a little movement* *frozen* *To one pitch...* *Slowly growing* *Subtly building Decaying...* *To one pitch...*

*ppp* *p* *ppp*

A438 A496/497

Voice: To light and then re - turn Gaze for which I cease to live

Orch. *Following the voice, but not with it.* *Hold* *Together* *Decay* *Building* *Transition: decay and sneak in*

26 A394/394a

Voice: ac-cept my tim - id hap-pi-ness no joy can be in vein but adds to some bright sweet whose dwell-ing

Orch.

40 A252

Voice: in this short life that on - ly mere-ly how much how lit-tle is with in

Orch.

*n*

For some time, the percussion hums.  
In waves; dark and rich.