

# Six Downie Nocturnes

*In memory of Martin Downie*



For viola and piano

David Lancaster



# Six Downie Nocturnes (2013)

For viola and piano

Duration: 13 minutes

This music comprises three pairs of highly contrasted miniatures; each movement is separated from its 'companion' in order to explore possible relationships between the different pairs (in spite of the stark contrasts between them) and to fracture the natural continuity of the music.

The outer pieces are a sustained chorale, plaintive and largely undecorated.

The second and fourth Nocturnes are a small tribute to Elliott Carter who died while I was at work on this commission. Whilst some elements of the pieces remain constant (the quick notes in the viola part, for example) others effect a gradual *rallentando* through a series of metric modulations. In the second Nocturne the viola outlasts the piano and her music flowers into melody whereas in the fourth the final outcomes are reversed.

The third and fifth Nocturnes are based on a song which I composed in 2010 to words by Daniela Nunnari: *The day the clocks went back, the autumn sky bled grey...* The third Nocturne is virtually a transcription of that song whilst number five subjects the melody of the song to a process of fragmentation, redistributing its phrases over soft, bell-like sounds in the piano.

The Six Downie Nocturnes are dedicated to the memory of Martin Downie, ceramic artist and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at York St John University, who died in November 2012.

Six Downie Nocturnes were first performed by Rosalind Ventriss and Lara Dodds-Eden in May 2013 in the Unitarian Chapel, York.

# Nocturne 1

David Lancaster

Lento ♩ = 60

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and the instruction *sempre*. The melody features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with some notes tied across measures. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a sparse accompaniment of chords and single notes, also marked *pp sempre*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

The second system of the musical score continues from the first. It begins with a measure number '8' above the treble clef. The upper staff continues the melodic line with various rhythmic values and ties. The lower staff provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The key signature remains one sharp (F#).

The third system of the musical score begins with a measure number '15' above the treble clef. The upper staff continues the melodic development. The lower staff continues the accompaniment. The key signature remains one sharp (F#).

22

Musical score for measures 22-29. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with two staves (treble and bass clef). The music features various time signatures: 3/4, 4/4, and 2/4. The piano part consists of chords and octaves, with some notes marked with a flat (b).

30

Musical score for measures 30-34. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with two staves (treble and bass clef). The music features various time signatures: 2/4, 4/4, and 3/4. The piano part consists of chords and octaves, with some notes marked with a flat (b).

## Nocturne 2

Ritmico ♩ = 60

Musical score for measures 35-40. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with two staves (treble and bass clef). The music features various time signatures: 3/4, 2/4, and 3/4. The piano part consists of chords and octaves, with some notes marked with a flat (b). The tempo is marked "Ritmico" and the metronome is set to 60. Dynamics include *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *p*. There are also markings for "6" (sixteenth notes) and "8va" (octave).

41 *f* *p* *f* *pizz.* *arco* **Più mosso** ♩=90

45 *p* *f* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *8va* *Ped.*

48 *f* *p* *mf* *p* **Più mosso** ♩=120 *pizz.*

53 arco *f* 3 3 3 *p*

(8) *mf* *p* Ped.

Half Tempo ♩=60

56 *f* 6 *p* 6 *f* 6 *p*

(8) *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

59 *f* 6 *p* 6 *f* 6 *mf* *p* *mf*

(8) *mf* *p* *mf*

61

*p* *f*

63

*p* *f* *p*

66

4/4 2/4 4/4

*morendo al fine*

69

# Nocturne 3

Independent of the piano, and always just a little slower.

Adagio ♩ = c.60

*8va sempre*

*pp*

*8va*

This stave 'cued' by the viola; play with the viola or as soon as possible afterwards.

7

viola begins within bracket

*mp espress.*

*ppp*

*8va*

(8)



12

*ppp* *8<sup>vb</sup>*

16

*ppp* *8<sup>vb</sup>*

*ppp* *8<sup>vb</sup>*

21

(8<sup>va</sup>)

repeat, if necessary, until viola ends.

*pp*

8<sup>vb</sup>-----

26

(8<sup>va</sup>)

*mf*

8-----

32

(8va)

*ppp* 8<sup>vb</sup>-----|

*ppp* 8<sup>vb</sup>-----|

37

(8va)

pause, if necessary,  
until viola ends.

*pp*

8<sup>vb</sup>-----|

*ppp* 8<sup>vb</sup>-----|

42

*pp*

(8va)

(8).....|

47

*slentando*

*ppp 8vb*.....|

*ppp 8vb*.....|

# Nocture 4

Ritmico ♩ = 60

Measures 1-53. Dynamics: *f*, *p*. Features sixteenth-note runs in the right hand.

Measures 54-66. Dynamics: *f*, *p*, *mf*. Features triplet rhythms and an 8va section.

Measures 67-74. Dynamics: *f*, *p*, *mf*. Features triplet rhythms and an (8) section.

60 *Più mosso* ♩=90

(♩ = ♩)

*f* *p* *mf* *p*

62

8<sup>va</sup>

*f* *p* *mf* *p*

*Ped.*

64 *Più mosso* ♩=120

(♩ = <sup>3</sup>♩)

*f* *mf* *p*

68

⑧

*f* *p*

*mf* *p*

Ped.

Half Tempo ♩=60

72

*f* *f*

*mf* *p* *mf* *p*

75

*f*

*mf* *p* *mf* *p*

79

mf p

mf p

## Nocturne 5

Adagio ♩ = 60

poco sul pont.

mp

pp

mp

sim.

p

mp

Ped. sempre

90

pp

mp



95

*pp* *mp* *pp*

100

*mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

106

*mp* *pp*

111

*mp* *pp*

## Nocturne 6

Lento ♩ = 60

*pp* *pp*

123

*pp*

129 *espress.*  
*mp*

135 *pp*

142 *pp*

146