Swimming Between Shores

... a woman's journey through identity ...

by Morag Galloway and Merit Ariane Stephanos



Duration: approximately one hour

For Merit

Swimming Between Shores was first performed in the Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall, Music Department, University of York, as part of the York Spring Festival, on the 29th April 2015.

It was commissioned by Terry Holmes for the Composer and Performer Award, 2015, and had the following cast:

THE WANDERER Merit Ariane Stephanos - Soprano

THE TRUTH Nilufar Habibian - Qanun

THE SHAPESHIFTERS John Cummins - Violin Dan Hodd - Violin/Baritone Morag Galloway - Viola Charlotte Bishop - Cello

THE TRAVELLERS Richard Oakman - Recorders/Saxophones Katharine Wood - Flutes/Saxophones

Sound Technicians - Oliver Larkin and Ben Eyes Lighting Technician - John Rawling

The pre-recorded voices on the backing tracks are:

THE SPIRITS Carter Sligh - Counter Tenor Toby Churchley - Tenor Jack Comerford - Bass

THE MUSES Chloe Gilgallon - Voice One Rachel Dyson - Voice Two Sarah Dickenson - Voice Three Cathy Abbott - Voice Four Elizabeth Towne Allen - Voice Five

Production Note

Character names are used in the script, instrument names are used in the musical scores. This will help director and cast make decisions as to who plays and/or speaks which material.

The Arabic pieces, written by Merit Ariane Stephanos, need a singer who can read and speak Arabic to perform them. Watching the film of the original production (included on the DVD with this score) will inform how the words are set to the melody lines.

Use of an extra Arabic musician/instrument is optional, but recommended. Depending on the instrument chosen by the production team, any suitable musical line can be substituted between a Western instrument and an Arabic one. Similarly a drum can be used in the piece, if desired.

Watching the film will, again, help inform the production, but ultimately decisions regarding character, staging, lighting and props are left to the director/production team.

Extra musicians/actors can be used if there isn't a performer who can double up instruments (as with THE TRAVELLERS in the original production, for example).

The original production used an Apollonian Cone in *The Flaw of Space: Part One* and *The Flaw of Space: Part Two.* This could be recreated exactly, a similar prop or object used, or nothing used at all.

The piece is split into two Acts to indicate where a break would occur should the performance(s) require an interval.

In preparation for producing a performance of this piece it is highly recommended that the poetry of Arabic women, namely Etel Adnan's *There*, is read. This will inform the rehearsal process and enrich the performance. The texts from *There* used on the recorded tracks are included on the DVD in the score for this purpose.

Workshopping Arabic Maqam during the rehearsal process with the whole cast, if possible, will be hugely beneficial, as would using the String Loops (on pages 4 and 5) to explore movement and conceptual ideas of identity and circularity. Any musical and textual material can be used, out of context, in the rehearsal process to aid understanding and create meaning.

ACT ONE

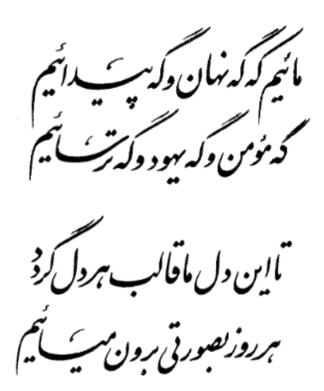
Introduction - This Is Me

String Quartet/THE SHAPESHIFTERS preset on stage. Arabic musician/THE TRUTH can be preset too, if used.

THE TRUTH: [In English or Farsi.]:

This is me: Sometimes hidden and sometimes revealed, Sometimes a devoted Muslim, sometimes a Hebrew and a Christian, For me to fit inside everyone's heart, I put on a new face every day.

(Rumi This Is Me)



Scene One - The Beginning. The Creation. The Question.

MUSE VOICE ONE: (Recorded Track 1)

Where are we? where? There is a *where*, because we are, stubbornly, and have been, and who are we, if not you and me?

Where are we? Out of History, of his or her story, and back into it, out in Space and back to Earth, out of the womb, and then into dust, who are we?

Where is where, where the terror, the love, the pain? Where the hatred? Where your life, and mine?

Who are we, a woman or a man, and is that seasonal, is it eternal, and is it true that there are men and women and it must be true, because you are and I am.

Where are we? In the middle, at the beginning, the end? Who is we, is it you plus me, or something else expandable, explosive, the salt and pepper of our thoughts, the something that may outlast our divinities?

Who are we, us the children of History, whose, which period, which side of History, the wars or the poems, the queens or the strangers, on which side of whose History are we going to be? Are we going to be?

Where are we? In a desert, on a glacier, within a mother's womb or in a woman's eyes, in a man's yearning, or are we into each other, each other's future, as we have been in the past? Are we dead or alive?

(Etel Adnan *There*)

STRING QUARTET: All lines are started together but are not in unison. Music starts then gets louder and erratic. Eventually it is frantic. This is in response to THE WANDERER entering. She moves round the stage, hearing the music and looking for it. Eventually she becomes agitated by it and stops the music abruptly with the vocal cue below.

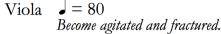
THE WANDERER: [Shouted.] No!













Violoncello



She composes herself in the silence and faces the audience, then sings an unaccompanied Aramaic Chant (for example Man Dodekh, which was used in the original production).

SHAPESHIFTER: (Viola player in original production). [Spoken over the Aramaic Chant.]

We came from our own country in a red room
which fell through the fields, our mother singing
our father's name to the turn of the wheels.

My brothers cried, one of them bawling, Home,
Home, as the miles rushed back to the city,
the street, the house, the vacant rooms
where we didn't live any more. I stared
at the eyes of a blind toy, holding its paw.

All childhood is an emigration. Some are slow, leaving you standing, resigned, up an avenue where no one you know stays. Others are sudden. Your accent wrong. Corners, which seem familiar, leading to unimagined pebble-dashed estates, big boys eating worms and shouting words you don't understand. My parents' anxiety stirred like a loose tooth in my head. *I want our own country*, I said.

But then you forget, or don't recall, or change, and, seeing your brother swallow a slug, feel only a skelf of shame, I remember my tongue shedding its skin like a snake, my voice in the classroom sounding just like the rest. Do I only think I lost a river, culture, speech, sense of first space and the right place? Now, Where do you come from? strangers ask. Originally? And I hesitate.

(Dame Carol Ann Duffy Originally)

Scene Two - The Flaw Of Space: Part One

MUSE VOICE TWO: (Recorded Track 2)

Go deep into the world's throat, there's no way out of this universe, but then is there a universe, and why, and where from, and is its existence necessary for anything to *be*, and if there's not a somewhere what then, with no faith, no hope, there's maybe love, somewhere?

(Etel Adnan There)

THE WANDERER: Moves towards a different part of the stage, towards an Apollonian Cone, or other prop/lighting state/stage area.

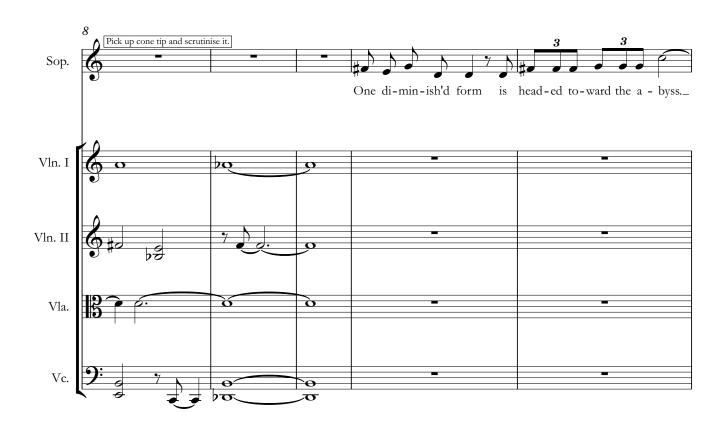
STRING QUARTET and THE WANDERER: Perform The Flaw of Space: Part One.

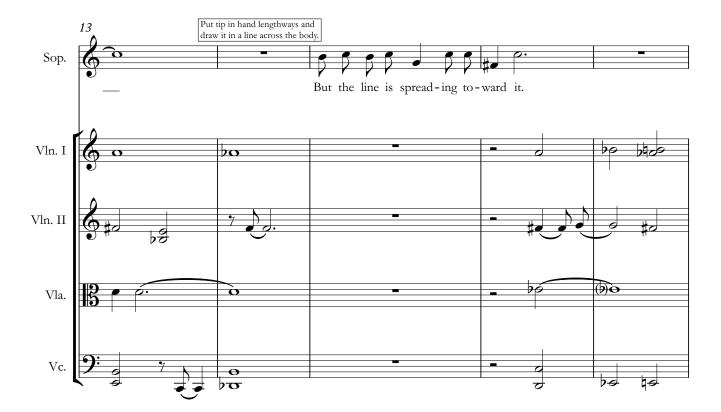
The Flaw Of Space: Part One

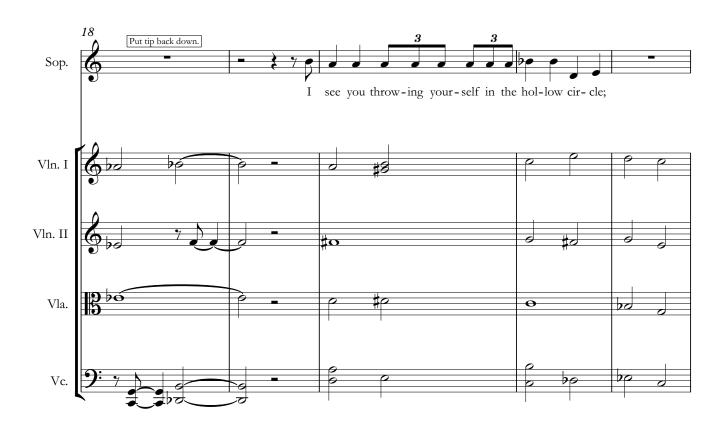
Music Morag Galloway Words Sabah al-Kharrat Zwein, trans Kaissar Afif from *As if in Flaw* or *In the Flaw of Space*

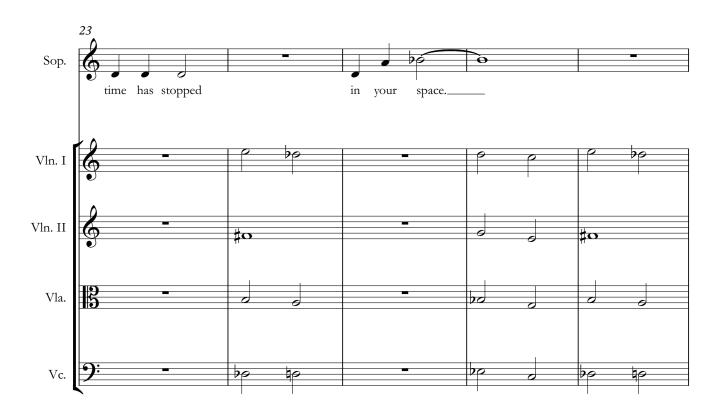
Original stage directions for use of an Apollonian Cone are included, as a guide/suggestion.

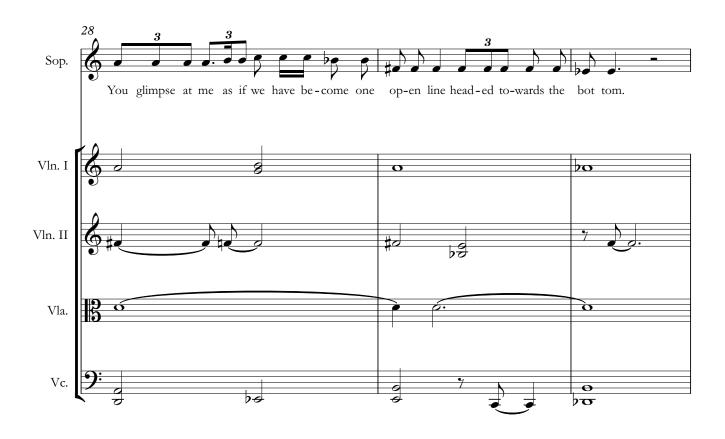


















Scene Three - Stunning Looks but Forbidden Love

MUSIC NOTE:

Inspired by the Mwashshah form: Using maqam Hjaz Kar Kurd, transposed

from C to A. Rhythm line is called Dawr Hind, and is played by String Quartet, then 1st violin and woodwind play additional instrumental line.

Stunning Looks

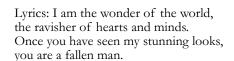
Music Merit Ariane Stephanos Words Safiyya al Baghdadeyya (12th Century)

STRING QUARTET and THE WANDERER perform Stunning Looks in Arabic whilst THE TRAVELLERS join her on stage, dancing and improvising with the music. They are seated, behind music stands, by the end.

= 128

Repeat throughout. First few repetitions as written, until the voice enters, then notes can be embellished with chords and rhythmic additions.

String Quartet





















Words Fail, Bodies Fall

MUSIC NOTE:

Soprano continues singing *Stunning Looks* melody over below material, until her new musical material starts.

A drum could be added from the 5/8 section. (The viola player stopped playing to do this in the original performance.)

Morag Galloway































MUSE VOICE THREE: (Recorded Track 3)

The sun is above me, the original one that angels speak about, a ball of fire, look!

There's dust over there, storms, there's love, which love, what for, there's SOMETHING over there which keeps growing ...

It's cold, over there, under primitive tents made of skins as soft as my heart's.

You're so beautiful, young fellow, my eyes can't see you, so pale that your presence lights my house. Anyway, who are you? Born under a female sign, a warrior, woman or man, and does it matter when desire rises before we know it, telling things unknown?

(Etel Adnan There)

Under the recording SHAPESHIFTER/Violin 1 comes forward to music stand on stage close to THE WANDERER.

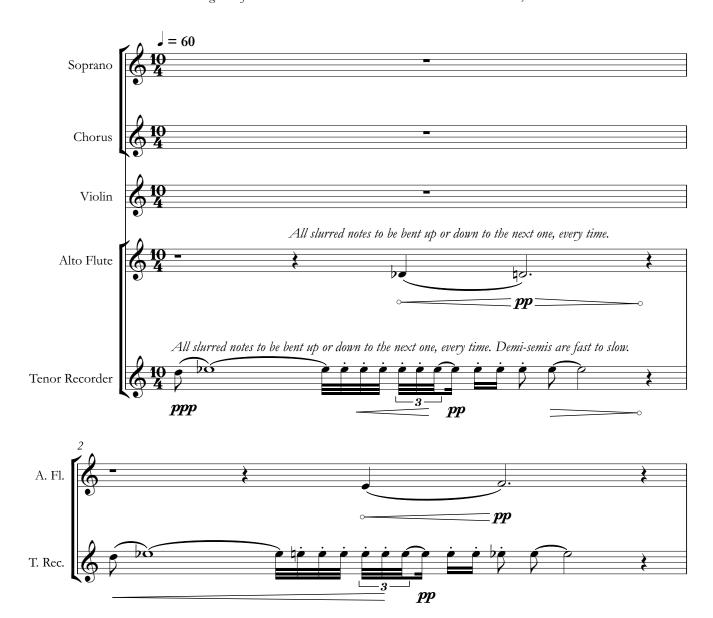
The SHAPESHIFTERS/Violin 2, Viola and Cello move forward and take up a position together somewhere on stage in audience view.

Forbidden Love

MUSIC NOTE:

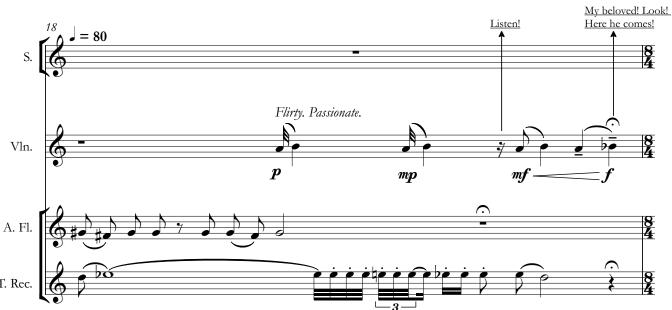
The violin line is based on an English folk melody; The Blacksmith. Music Morag Galloway Words Song of Songs New International Bible dramatised by Morag Galloway

THE WANDERER/Soprano has two spoken styles: naturalistic in bold text, and heightened/dramatic in underlined text. All her spoken dialogue is above her stave. Arrows indicate where the text should start; cues being taken from the instrumentalists. The SHAPESHIFTERS sing role of Chorus. The Tenor Recorder's cue to start is 'It's cold,' in the recorded text.



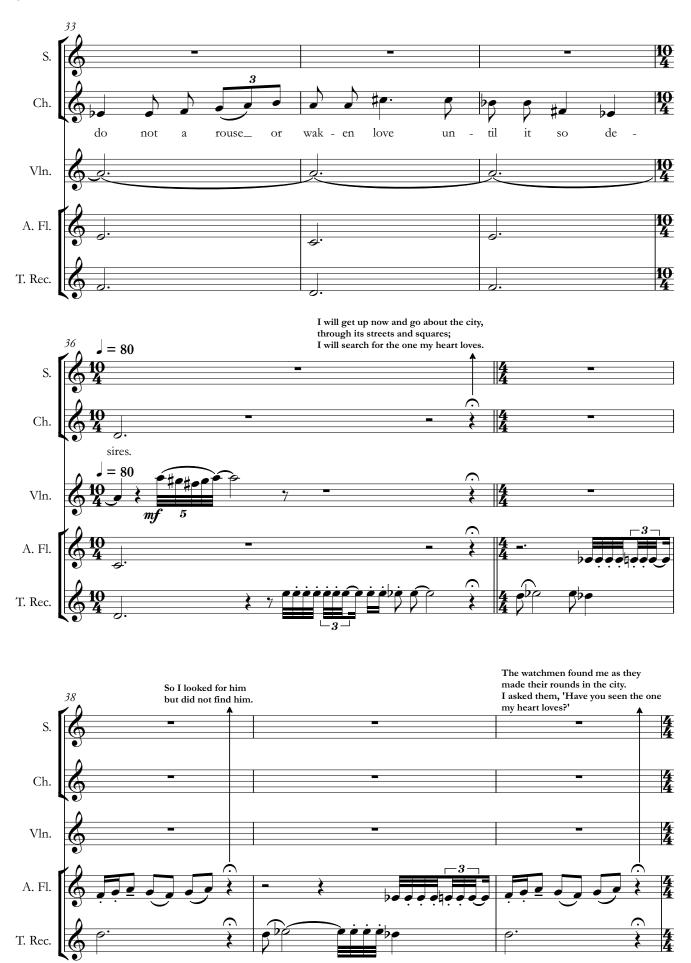


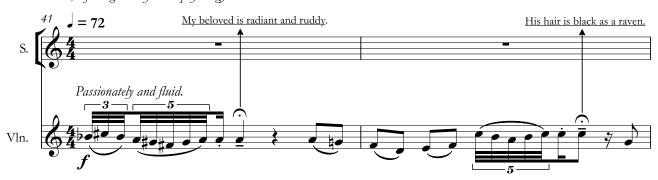


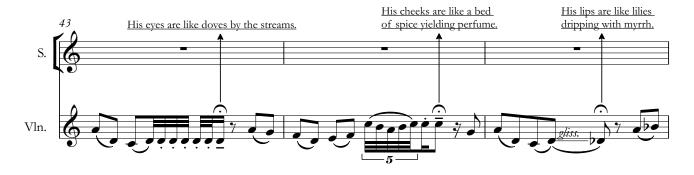














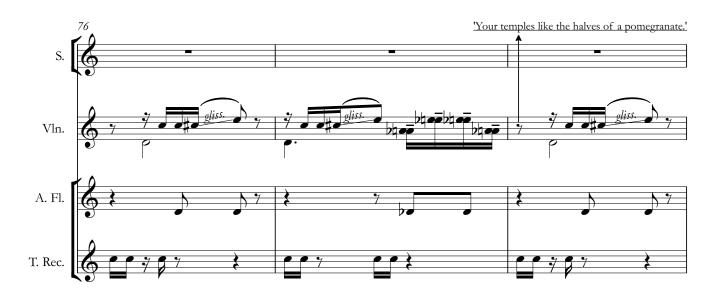




















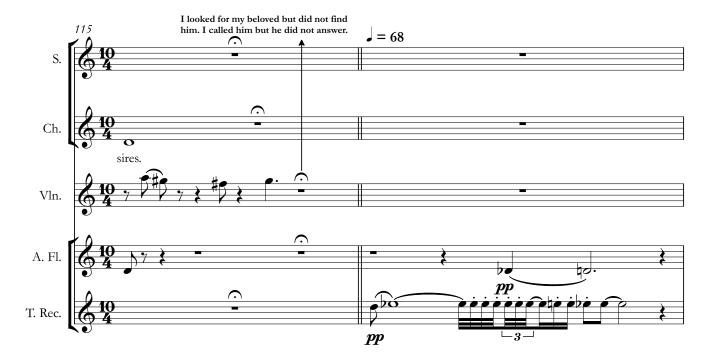


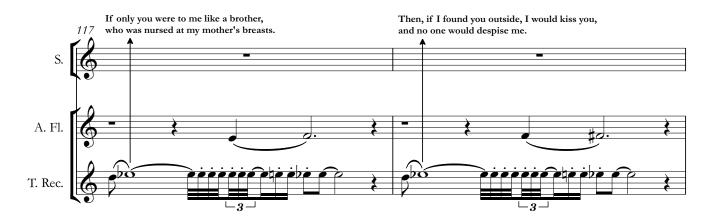


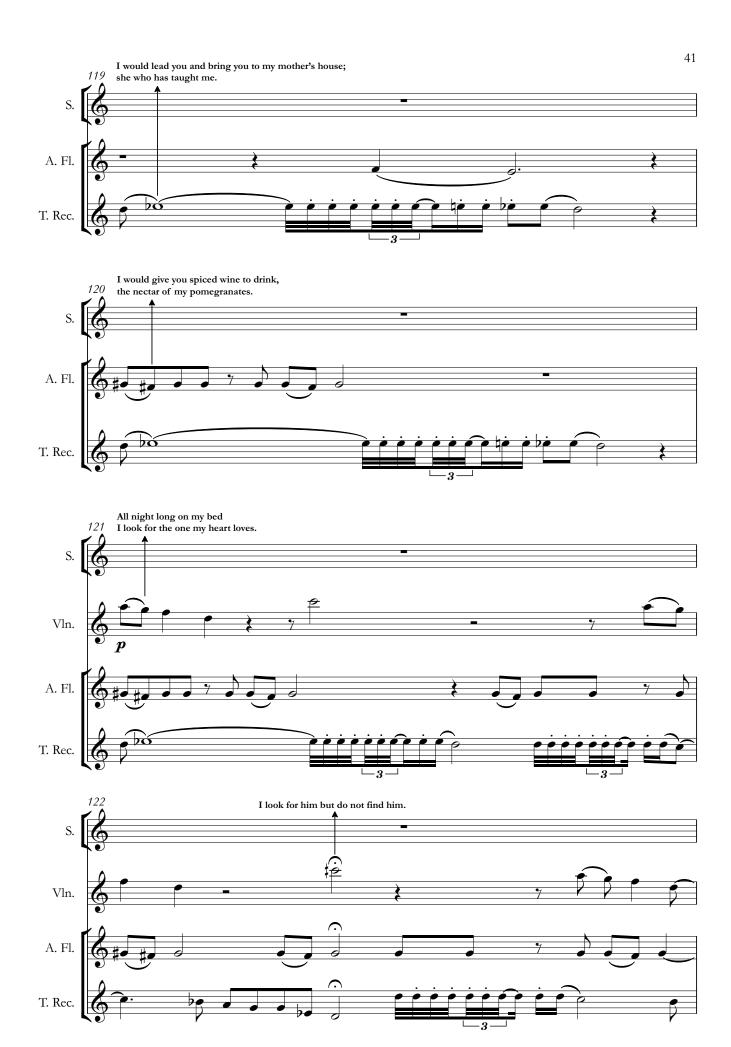


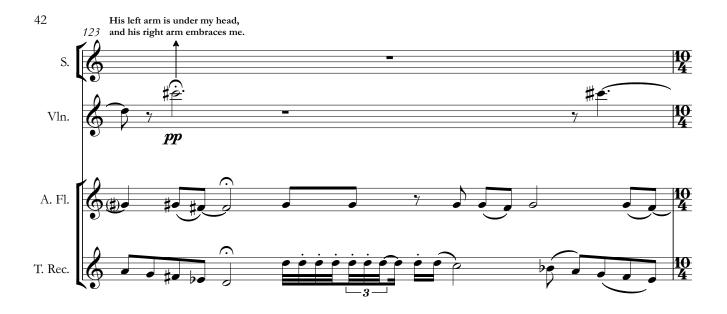


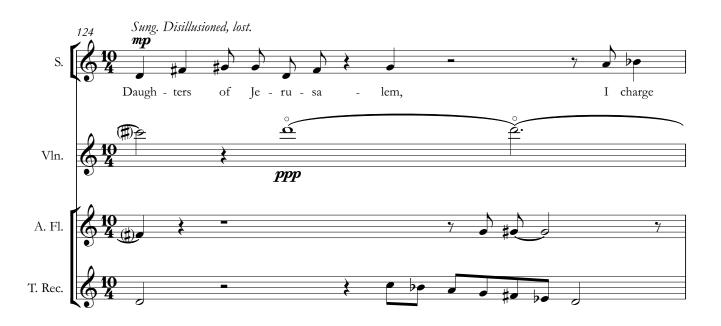


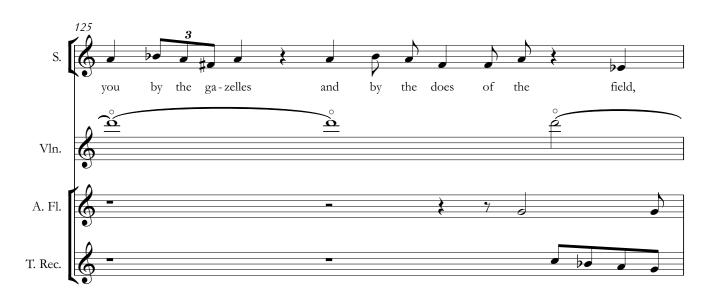




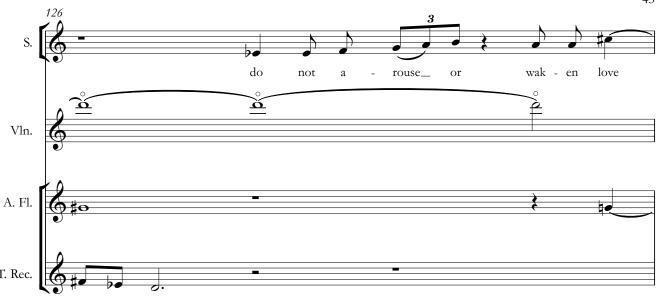














THE TRUTH: [In English or Farsi, as before.]:
This is me: Sometimes hidden and sometimes revealed,
Sometimes a devoted Muslim, sometimes a Hebrew and a Christian,
For me to fit inside everyone's heart,
I put on a new face every day.

Violin 1, Violin 2 and Cello return to STRING QUARTET seats during above. SHAPESHIFTER moves forward, towards audience.

ACT TWO

Scene Four - Double Loves: My Child and My Mother, My Lover and My God.

SHAPESHIFTER: (Viola player in original production.) An Arabic speaking performer could speak it in Arabic simultaneously.

My little boy's smell is all lavender.

Is every little boy like him, or hasn't anyone given birth before me?

(Anonymous *The Lavender Boy*)

THE WANDERER and THE TRUTH (or other instrumentalist) perform Double Loves. The below text is interspersed between the singing.

SHAPESHIFTER:

I close my eyes trying to bring back my mother's face when she laughed. She had a very special laugh that belonged only to her, and resembled no other laugh in the world. It rang out in the house, swept through the walls into the street, into open space filling the whole universe. I could hear it as I walked along by my father's side. Its ring in my ears was wonderful, like the ring of sweet, limpid water in a vessel of pure silver or crystal.

I used to hear it before I entered our house. My hand would slip out of my father's long fingers and I would run up to her. She would sweep me up in her arms, hold me to her breast, feed me. Her smell has never left my nostrils. It is as though it were the smell of my body. It belongs with the smell of fresh milk and hot bread and of steam rising from soup in the cold of winter.

My mother used to hold me up on the surface of the sea, teach me how to jump or float over the waves. I thrash the water with my arms and legs, and laugh. I drown under the waves with laughter. My mother pulls me out, laughing all the time. Our laughter rises in the air above the waves.

The waves rise up, then break into white surf. The white of the surf melts into the blue of the sea, and the sea fuses with the sky, travels to where they meet far away at the horizon. My mother's arms carry me high up, and my head touches the heavens.

My mother rebelled against many things but still she held on to certain traits of femininity which I did not share with her. Moments before she died, she stretched out her hand to a little flask of *khol*, pulled out the rod and drew a line of black around her eyes, painted her lips with a baton of rouge, sprayed perfume around her neck and around her ears, and combed her hair ...

When she did, I saw her eyes open wide full of a sudden childish surprise, as though she were discovering the truth for the first time ... Her lips parted for a moment perhaps to express what she had now found out, but death was quicker, snatched her away before she could say anything.

(Nawal El Saadawi - A Daughter of Isis)

See overleaf for score.

Double Love

MUSIC NOTE:

Originally for voice and qanun.

In the style of Mawwal - an improvisatory form of singing with text. The qanun improvises with the vocal line. Using maqam Saba.

Music Merit Ariane Stephanos Words Rabi'a al Adaweyya

Lyrics:

I love You a double love:

I love You passionately and I love You for Yourself

My passionate love pertains only to You.

I love You for Yourself so You would drop Your veil to let me see You. I am not to be thanked;

all thanks must go to You.



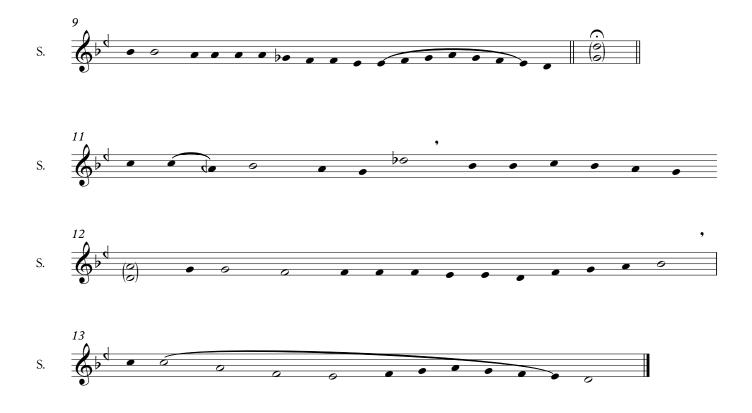












SHAPESHIFTER: [Once the music is over.] An Arabic speaking performer could speak it in Arabic simultaneously.

The morning south wind blew from my son's land his musk, ambergris and lavender scented presence.

I miss him and the thought of him tears my eyes like a prisoner recalling home under the shackles' painful grip, or the cries of a soul away from its love.

اذًا مَا أَتَتْنَا الريّح مِنْ نَحْوِ أَرضِهِ أَتَتْنَا بريّات نصاب هبوبُهَا أَتَتْنَا بمسلّكِ خالطَ المسكَ عنبر وريح خزامي باكرتها جنوبُهَا أحنُ لذكراهُ اذا مَا ذكرتُهُ وتتهلُ عبرات تفيض غروبُهَا حنينَ أسيرٍ نازحٍ شدَّ قَيْدهُ وإعوال نفسٍ غابَ عنها حبيبُهَا

(Umm Khalid Annumairiyya - Lavender Scented Presence)

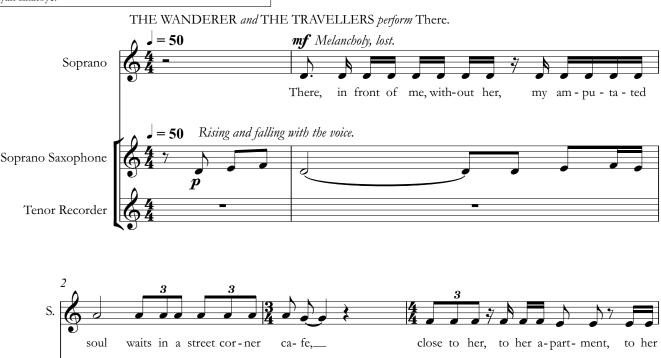
Scene Five - From There to Here

MUSIC NOTE: The E naturals may be changed into E quarter flats, to become

a true Arabic Saba maqam. The vocal and instrumental lines may also be ornamented. The saxophone line is a Jewish Melody; Orcha Bamibar, the recorder line an Aramaic Chant; Hayan Lhatoyé.

There

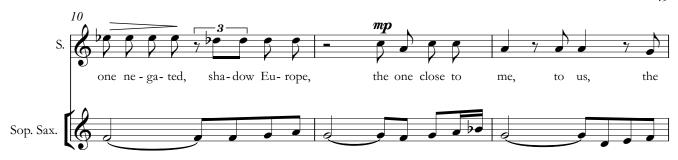
Music Morag Galloway Words from There by Etel Adnan



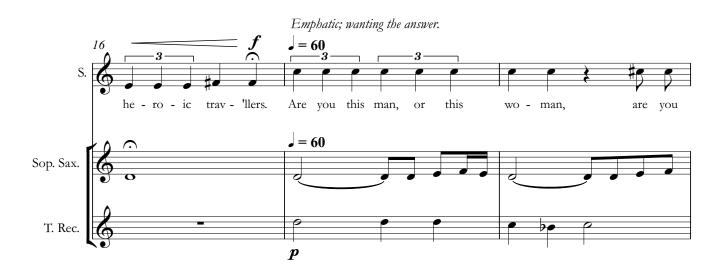


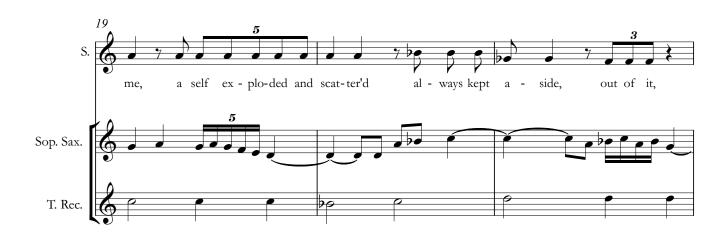














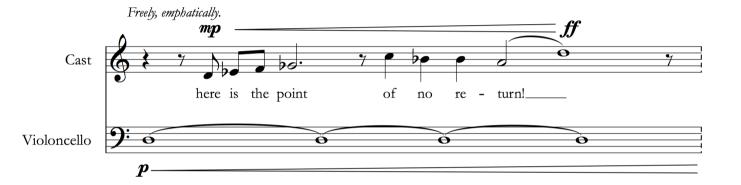


THE WANDERER and CAST: [Spoken. Each voice joining THE WANDERER one at a time, until whole cast is speaking at once. All voices segue straight into singing the music.]

What is here?: a place or an idea, a circle focused in God's eye, a cosmic wave's frozen frame, transient, doomed?

Here, where the heat mollifies, when the body surrenders before solicitations could reach it, and there, where the temperature boils the mind and makes it explode into sudden action:

(Etel Adnan - There)



Segue into:

Scene Six - The Flaw of Space: Part Two

MUSE VOICE FOUR: (Recorded Track 4) [STRING QUARTET start playing The Flaw of Space: Part Two on 'circularity'.]

Such as two trees planted next to each other, under an ageing moon, we're prisoners of a circularity. Remembrance needs primeval forgiveness. Energies, in their acceleration, will break the heavens.

There, where there's fire, when the fear of death coincides with spring, are we going to be doomed to be lovers who could never meet, restless as the sea's surface?

O devastated creation! Love of love, eyes filled with dust, the burned body's particles dispersed, end of end and end's ending brought about by the sun's decisions, o the resurrection of desire after the body's destruction! If you aren't, how can the soul not die?

(Etel Adnan - *There*)

The Flaw Of Space: Part Two

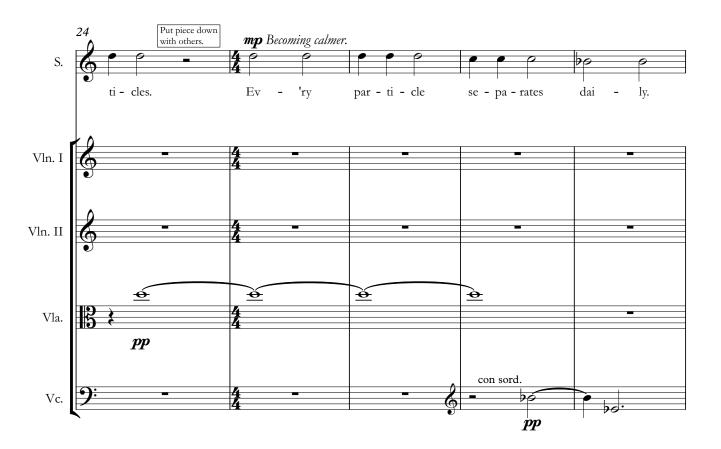
Music Morag Galloway Words Sabah al-Kharrat Zwein, trans Kaissar Afif from *As if in Flaw* or *In the Flaw of Space*

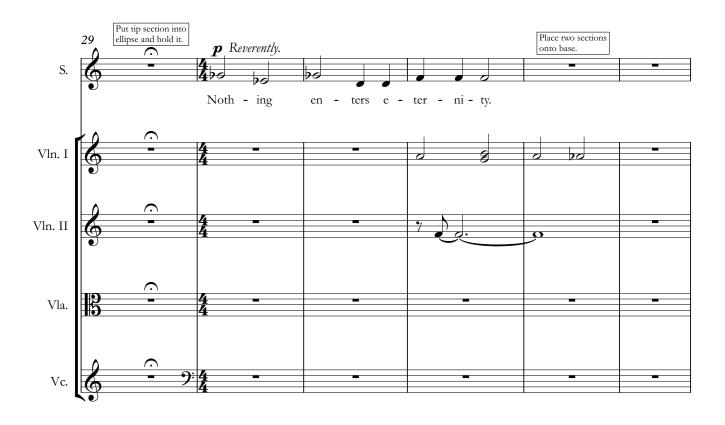
Original stage directions for use of an Apollonian Cone are included again, as a guide/suggestion. STRING QUARTET start playing on 'circularity' in the recorded track. Soprano Becoming more glassy and expansive, and getting quieter.



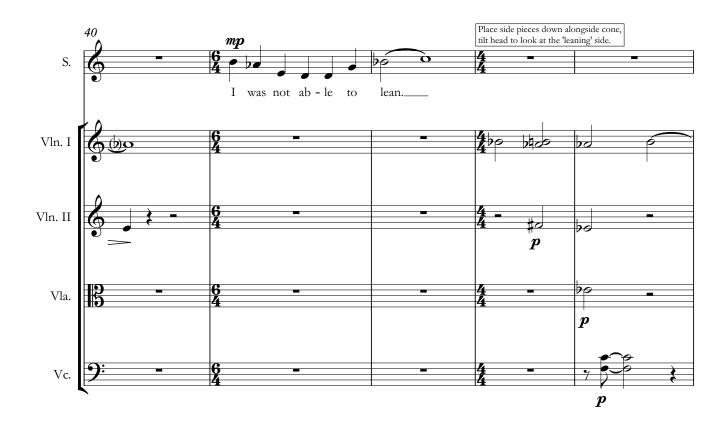


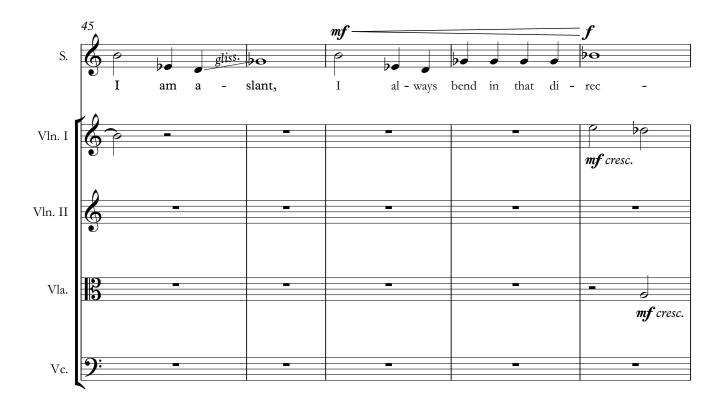


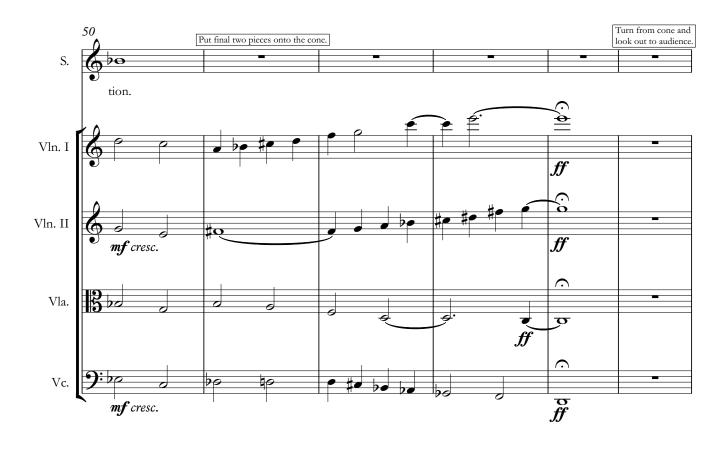














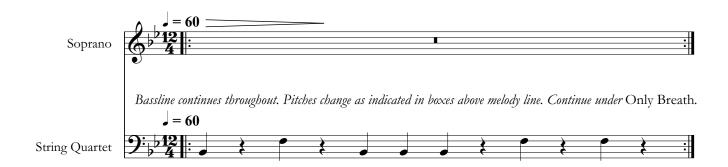
Scene Seven - A Realisation. A Resolution.

MUSIC NOTE:

Inspired by the Mwashshah form: Using maqam Shawq Afza (with a Ajam pentachord on bottom and Hjaz (with augmented second) tetrachord on top - from Bb-Bb). Rhythm is called Mudawwar Masri (Mudawwar from Egypt).

Realisation

Music Merit Ariane Stephanos Words Maisun bint Bahdal (d.700)



Lyrics: I would rather be in a house full of life than in a tall palace.
And I prefer a simple gown to a chiffon dress.

Eating a little crumb in a happy house is much better than eating a whole loaf with no happiness in it. The sound of the wind is more enjoyable to me than the playing of the drum.

Even a small, meagre sheep from my uncle's house

is more beautiful to me than a big, fat sheep. The hard life of the Beduins is more pleasing for my own spirit than having an easy life.

If I won't have her,

I prefer to be in my own country home.

أحبُ إلي من قصر منيف أحبُ إلي من قط ألوف أحبُ إلي من قط ألوف أحبُ إلي من لبس الشُفوف أحبُ إلي من نقر الدُفوف أحبُ إلي من نقر الدُفوف أحبُ إلي من علج عليف أحبُ إلي من علج عليف إلى نفسي من العيش الطريف فحسب ذاك من وطن شريف فحسب ذاك من وطن شريف

لَبَيْتُ تخفِقُ الأرواحُ فيه وكلبُ يَنبَحُ الطُّرُاق عنسَي وكلبُ يَنبَحُ الطُّرُاق عنسَي ولُبسُ عباءة وتقرَّ عيني وأكلُ كُسَيْرة في كِسر بيتي وأصواتُ الرياح بكلَّ فَجً وخرقٌ من بنى عَمِّي نحيفٌ خُشونةُ عيشتي في البدُو أشهى فما أبغى سوى وطني بديلاً







THE WANDERER and THE TRUTH:

[Spoken in English and Farsi simultaneously. Bassline continues underneath.]

Not Christian or Jew or Muslim, not Hindu, Buddhist, sufi or zen.

Not any religion or cultural system.

I am not from the East or the West,

not out of the ocean or up from the ground,

not natural or ethereal, not

composed of elements at all.

I do not exist, am not an entity in this world or the next,

did not descend from Adam or Eve or any origin story.

My place is placeless, a trace of the traceless.

Neither body or soul.

I belong to the beloved,

have seen the two worlds as one and that one call to and know:

first, last, outer, inner, only that

breath breathing human being.

(Rumi - Only Breath)

په تدبرائ سامان کومن خود دانمیلخ نشر قیم نیخربنی نه بریم نه سوانم نشر قیم نیخربنی نه بریم نه سوریخ نه از خاکه نه از از می نه از از خوانی از خود در ضواخ نه از دینی نه از عقبی از خود در ضواخ نه از دینی نه از عقبی از خود در خوانم کاغم لامکان باشد شاغم بی شاشید دوئی ازخود برون دم کی در در خواخ زمام مش سرستم دو ملا و شاخری از می می در نوشهایم اگر در عمر خود روزی می بی د برا و در از می بی در نوشهایم الای شمس سرزی چهان مجرد در ماللای شده بی در انتا می در

THE CAST assemble on stage during Only Breath, playing the bassline. This segues into Resolution.

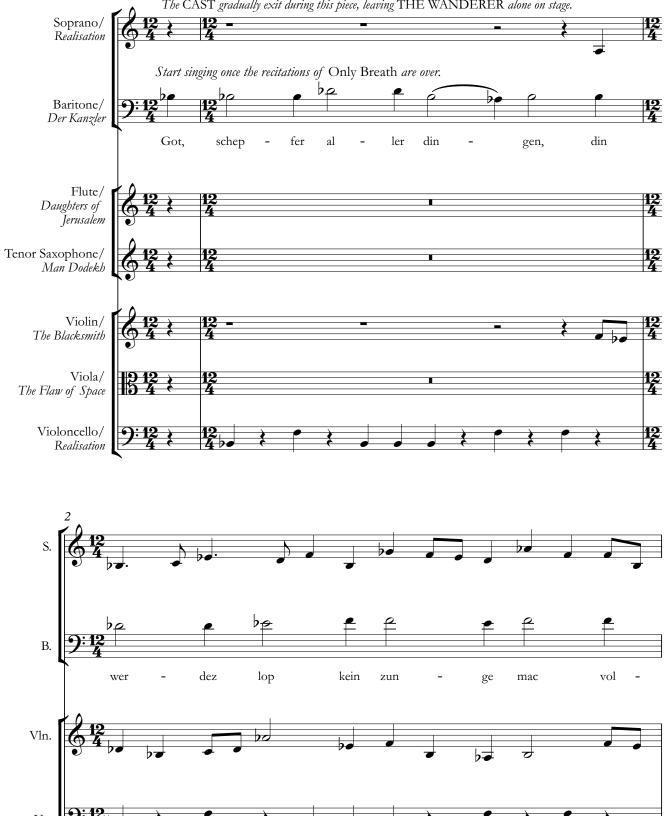
MUSIC NOTE:

This score is an example of how all the melodies from the show create a medley at the end. Individual entries are flexible, lines are improvisatory in feel and dynamics may be judged from overall feel of ensemble balance.

Resolution

Morag Galloway

The lyrics for Der Kanzler are the original German lyrics. Realisation uses the same Arabic lyrics as before. The CAST gradually exit during this piece, leaving THE WANDERER alone on stage.























THE WANDERER: Faces audience, then sings an unaccompanied Aramaic Chant (for example Shoubho l'hwo qolo, which was used in the original production). At the beginning of the second verse/repetition MUSE VOICE FIVE starts.

MUSE VOICE FIVE: (Recorded Track 5)

From the primeval waters we arose - you and I, from the beginning we went on a search and when the gardens grew we looked together for a shade, didn't we? From the desire to live we arose and built nations, didn't we?

Then we were visited by a creature not named by any of the gods and we called it Death, and it took power over us, and autumn on its first day started to shed yellowish leaves on our beds; then the trees stared at their own bareness and we didn't come to their aid, did we?

(Etel Adnan *There*)

Blackout.

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