

Rockaby

(A setting of Samuel Beckett's play for woman's voice, four trombones, and piano.)

William Osborne

Notes

Light

Subdued on chair. Rest of stage dark. Subdued spot on face constant throughout, unaffected by successive fades. Either wide enough to include narrow limits of rock or concentrated on face when s till or at mid-rock. Then throughout speech face slightly swaying in and out of light.

Opening fade-up: first spot on face alone. Long pause. Then light on chair. Final fade-out: first chair. Long pause with spot on face alone. Head slowly sinks, comes to rest. Fade out spot.

W

Prematurely old. Unkempt gray hair. Huge eyes in white expressionless face. White hands hold ends of armrests.

Eyes

Now closed, now open in unblinking gaze. About equal proportions section 1, increasingly closed 2 and 3, close good halfway through 4.

Costume

Black lacy high-necked evening gown. Long sleeves. Jet sequins to glitter when rocking. Incongruous frivolous headdress set askew with extravagant trimmings to catch light when rocking.

Attitude

Completely still till fade-out of chair. Then in light of spot head slowly inclined.

Chair

Pale wood highly polished to gleam when rocking. Footrest. Vertical back. Rounded inward curving arms to suggest embrace.

Rock

Slight. Slow. Controlled mechanically without assistance from W.

Voice

Lines in italics spoken by W with V a little softer each time.

W's "More" a little softer each time. Towards end of section 4, say from "saying to herself" on, voice gradually softer.

Composer's notes

1. Follow the author's notes explicitly.
2. Every note is preceded by an accidental except repeated notes or patterns.
3. The music and V should be recorded multi-channel and remixed stereo with the piano subdued and the trombones very soft, reverberated, distant, and ephemeral.
4. The voice sounds one octave lower than written. It should sound authentic and untrained, sometimes more spoken than sung.

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(A setting of Samuel Beckett's play for woman's voice, four trombones, and piano.)

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W=Woman in chair.
V=Her recorded voice.

Fade up on W in rocking chair facing front downstage slightly off center audience left.

Effimero e lontano (♩=ca. 42)

Trb. 1 *p* (gliss.)

Piano *pp*

Trb. 1

W *Rock and voice together.* (Note that voices sound one octave lower than written.)

V *More. mp* **Semplice e non troppo cantabile**

Pno. *l.v.*

till in the end the day came in the end came close of a long day when she said to her self whom else time she stopped

Trb. 1 *pp* *lontano*

V *mp*

Pno. *8va*

time she stopped go-ing to and fro all eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er ano - oth-er like her-self an-oth-er crea-ture like her-self

V 39
8 a lit-tle like go - ing to and fro all eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er till in the end close of a long

Pno. 39
8va
8vb
3

Trb. 1 48

V 48
8 day to her - self whom else time she stoppd time she stoppd go - ing to and fro all eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er an-

Pno. 48
8va
5
3
8va
3
8va

V 58
8 oth-er liv-ing soul one oth-er liv-ing soul go-ing to and fro all eyes like her - self all sides high and low for an-oth-er an - oth-er like her-self

Pno. 58
3
calando
5
3
3

Trb. 1

Rock and voice together.

W

V

More.
mp

più mosso

Pno.

pp

so in the end close of a long day went back in in the end — went back in — say - ing to her self whom else time she stopped

8va

V

time she stopped go - ing to and fro time she went and sat at her win-dows qui-et at her win-dows fac - ing oth - er win - dows — so in the end

8va

Pno.

8va

8vb

V

close of a long day in the end went and sat went back in and sat at her win - dow let up the blind and sat qui - et at her win-dow on - ly win - dow fac - ing oth - er win-dows oth - er on - ly wind-dows all

Pno.

8vb

8va

121

Trb. 1

V

Pno.

8 eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er at her win-dow an - oth-er like her-self a lit-tle like an-oth-er liv-ing

pp

5

3

8^{va}

131

V

Pno.

8 soul one oth - er liv - ing soul at her win-dow gone in like her-self gone back in in the end

6

6

5

3

5

8^{va}

137

V

Pno.

8 close of a long say-ing to her-self whom else time she stopped

p

6

6

5

3

5

6

6

8^{va}

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for three instruments: Trb. 1, V (Violin), and Pno. (Piano). The score is divided into three systems, each corresponding to a different section of the music. The first system (measures 121-130) features a Trb. 1 part with a melodic line, a Violin part with a complex, arpeggiated texture, and a Piano part with a dense, rhythmic accompaniment. The second system (measures 131-140) continues the Violin and Piano parts, with the Violin part showing more melodic development and the Piano part maintaining its intricate texture. The third system (measures 137-146) shows the Violin part with a more sustained melodic line and the Piano part with a similar complex texture. The score includes various performance markings such as dynamics (pp, p), articulation (accents), and fingering (5, 3, 6). The lyrics are written below the Violin part, and the piano part includes some performance instructions like '8va' and '8vb'.

V 141 *time she stopped go-ing to and fro time she went and sat at her win - dow qui - et at her din-dow on - ly win-dow fac-ing oth-er win-dows oth - er on - ly win-dows*

Pno. 141

Trb. 1 147

Trb. 2 147 *Non meno mosso*

Together: echo of "living soul", coming to rest of rock, faint fade of light.

V 147 *all eyes all sides high and lows_ for an-oth-er an oth-er like her-self a lit - tle like_ an - oth-er liv-ing soul_ one oth-er liv-ing soul*

Pno. 147

Trb. 1 156

Trb. 2 156

Pno. 156

165

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

Pno.

8va

173

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

W

V

Pno.

Rock and voice together.

More. *mp*

Come sopra

till in the end the day came in the end came close of a

mp

p

8va

V 185
 8 long day sit-ting at her win-dow qui-et at her win-dow on-ly win-dow fac-ing oth-er win-dows oth-er on-ly win-dows all blinds down

Pno. 185
 3 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 3 6 6

8^{va} 8^{vb}

V 190
 8 ne-ver one up hers a-lone up till the day came in the end came close of a long day

Pno. 190
 6 6 6 6 6 5 5 5 3 3 3 3 5 5 3

molto rallantando

8^{va} 8^{va} 8^{va}

V 196
 8 sit-ting at her win-dow qui-et at her win-dow all eyes all sides high and low for a blind up one blind up no more

Pno. 196
 6 6 3 3 6 6 6 6 6 5

molto rallantando

8^{va} 8^{va}

V
229
8
time she stopped time she stopped sit-ting at her win-dow qui-et at her win-dow on - ly win - dow fac-ing oth-er win-dows oth-er on - ly win-dows all

Pno.
229
5 5 6 6 3 6 6

8va

Trb. 1
235

Trb. 2
235

Lontano

p

V
235
8
sides all eyes high and low time she stopped time she stopped

Together: echo of "time she stopped", coming to rest of rock, faint fade of light.

Pno.
235
6 6 5 3 3 3

8va

Lontano

p

Trb. 1

Musical notation for Trumpet 1, measures 298-306. Features triplets and eighth notes.

V

Musical notation for Violin, measures 298-306. Includes lyrics: "right down in - to the old rock - er those arms at last and rocked rocked with closed eyes clos-ing eyes she so long all eyes fam - ished eyes all sides high and low".

Pno.

Musical notation for Piano, measures 298-306. Includes dynamics like *8va* and *pp*, and various rhythmic patterns.

V

Musical notation for Violin, measures 307-314. Includes lyrics: "to and fro at her win-dow to see be seen till in the end close of a long day to her-self whom else time she stopped".

Pno.

Musical notation for Piano, measures 307-314. Includes dynamics like *8va* and *pp*, and various rhythmic patterns.

Trb. 1

Musical notation for Trumpet 1, measures 315-322. Includes dynamics like *pp* and triplets.

V

Musical notation for Violin, measures 315-322. Includes lyrics: "let down the blind and stopped time she went down down the steep stair time she went right down was her own oth-er own othy-er liv-ing soul so in the end close of a long day went down down the steep stair".

Pno.

Musical notation for Piano, measures 315-322. Includes dynamics like *8va* and *pp*, and various rhythmic patterns.

324

Trb. 1

V

8

let down the blind and down right down in - to the old roc - er and rocked rocked say - ing to her - self no done with that the rock - er

Pno.

324

8va

335

V

8

those arms at last say - ing to the rock - er rock her off stop her eyes fuck life stop her eyes rock her off rock her off

Pno.

335

349

Trb. 1

Pno.

349