

THE DEVIL'S DREAM

Seán Doherty
2015
String Quartet

SDM604

PROGRAMME NOTE

I was introduced to music through the fiddle tradition of Donegal. The tradition is distinctive in Ireland: not like the languid lilt of the Clare style nor the light patter of the Galway style, the Donegal style looks outwards, across the sea, for its closest kin—to Scotland and to Nova Scotia. Aggressive and driving, the tunes are as stark as the bogland, and the bowing as jagged as the cliffs. A leading exponent of this tradition was my teacher, the fiddle player James Byrne and this string quartet is loosely based on two tunes that I learned from his playing: *An Londubh* and *The Devil's Dream*.

James died on his walk home from a *seisiún* in the early hours of 8 November 2008 near his home in Mín na Croise. This piece imagines this walk. Half-remembered fragments of the slow air, *An Londubh*, slowly coalesce until its full form is reached, into which the reel, *The Devil's Dream*, intrudes as a *danse macabre* that demolishes the air. The air comes screaming back, only to be subsumed by the reel once more. After a quotation of the plainchant *Dies irae*, the reel itself disintegrates. From the ashes of the *Devil's Dream*, the air emerges in its final, transfigured, form.

This piece is written in memory of James Byrne (1946–2008), and for his partner Connie, and their daughters, Séana, Aisling, and Merle.

Performance Time: c. 14 mins

Commissioned by the Vanbrugh Quartet, with the support of the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaón



Seán Doherty Music
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PERFORMANCE NOTES

- All fast material should be played with a light, natural swing.
- The treble bow is a right-hand figuration pervasive in the Donegal fiddle tradition, achieved by a quick flick of the wrist, using very little bow (1–2mm approx.) and heavy bow pressure. It should contain little pitch.

 crescendo / diminuendo *al niente*

s.t. *sul tasto* s.p. *sul ponticello*

→ change very gradually from one way of playing to another

— glissando



independent repetition for duration of trill line



independent repetition for duration of beam line, and stop at any time that is convenient before next entry



as high as possible



headless notes show approximate pitch

Y
Not for

in memory of James Byrne
The Devil's Dream

Seán Doherty

The material until rehearsal mark A is intended not to be precisely co-ordinated.
 The players are independent, although they play in approximately the same tempo.
 This is a document of the contents of each part, laid out in separate sections.
 Begin together and incorporate first note into tuning-up procedure *ad lib.*, as if beginning informally.

$\text{♩} = c. 100$ **senza misura**

Violin I

0

$\text{PPP} - \text{P} - \text{MP} - \text{MF} \quad \Rightarrow \text{PP} \quad \text{P} - \text{MP} - \text{MF} > \text{P} - \text{MF} \quad \Rightarrow \text{PP}$

poco rit. A tempo

fast ascending and descending scales in C major
 s.t.

prepare to move on
 and in strict time to A
 ord.
 tr ~~~~~

c. 15"

$\text{♩} = c. 100$ **senza misura**

Violin II

0

$\text{PPP} - \text{P} - \text{MP} - \text{MF} \quad \Rightarrow \text{PP} \quad \text{P} - \text{MP} - \text{MF} > \text{P} - \text{MF} \quad \Rightarrow \text{PP}$

Musical score for strings showing measures 1-2. The first measure starts with a dynamic **p**. The second measure begins with a dynamic **mp**, followed by **mf**.

Musical score for strings showing measures 3-4. Measure 3 starts with a dynamic **mp**, followed by **p**. Measure 4 begins with a dynamic **mf**, followed by **p** and **mp**.

Musical score for strings showing measures 5-6. Measure 5 starts with a dynamic **mf**, followed by **mp**. Measure 6 begins with a dynamic **mf**, followed by **p**.

fast ascending and descending scales in C major
s.t.

Musical score for strings showing a trill starting at measure 7. The dynamic is **ppp**. The tempo is **c. 100 senza misura**. The duration is **c. 15"**. The instruction is: **Vln. I tr.**

Musical score for strings showing measures 8-9. Measure 8 starts with a dynamic **p**. Measure 9 begins with a dynamic **mp**, followed by **mf**, **pp**, **mp**, and **pp**.

play six times, approx.

Vln. I **tr.**

Musical score for strings showing measures 10-11. Measure 10 starts with a dynamic **pp**. Measure 11 begins with a dynamic **p**, followed by **mp**, **p**, and **pp**.

Musical score for strings showing measures 12-13. Measure 12 starts with a dynamic **c. 100 senza misura**, **c. 30"**. Measure 13 begins with a dynamic **pp**, followed by **p**, **mp**, and **p**.

play twice

Musical score for strings showing measures 14-15. Measure 14 starts with a dynamic **pp**. Measure 15 begins with a dynamic **p**, followed by **mp**, and **pp**.

At Vln I tr., prepare to move on immediately and in strict time to A

Vln. I **tr.**

$\text{♩} = 100$ In strict time

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

6 **A** 4 5 6 4 4 2 7 4

=

5 7 4 [2+2+3] 3+2+2 4 2 6 4

=

10 6 4 7 4 [3,2,2] 4 2 6 4 7 4

14

[3,2,2]

mf

mf

p

mf

f

f

f

=

18

[3,2,2]

A tempo

p

mf

mp

mf

mp

p

mf

p

mp

p

=

22

p

mp

p *espress.*

pp

mp

p

pp

mp

p

pp

mf

p

mp

p

mf

27

p *mp* *p* *feroce* *mp* *>p*
p *sffz*
p *mp*
pp *gliss* *p*

=

31 B

mp *mf* *mp* *feroce* *sffz* *mf*
mf
mp *mf*
mf *mp*

=

34

p
feroce
sffz
ff

36

espress.

38

40

42

Musical score for piano, page 7, measures 44-48. The score consists of four staves:

- Staff 1 (Treble Clef):** Shows a sustained note with a grace note, followed by a series of eighth-note chords.
- Staff 2 (Treble Clef):** Shows a sustained note with a grace note.
- Staff 3 (Bass Clef):** Shows a sustained note with a grace note, followed by a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes grouped in threes.
- Staff 4 (Bass Clef):** Shows a sustained note with a grace note, followed by a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes grouped in threes.

Measure 44: End of measure 44.

Measure 45: *mp (privately)*. The bass staff has a *gliss.* (glissando) instruction. The piano part continues with eighth-note chords.

Measure 46: The piano part features eighth-note chords with grace notes. The bass staff has a sustained note with a grace note.

Measure 48: The piano part features eighth-note chords with grace notes. The bass staff has a sustained note with a grace note.

50

==

52

p

4

==

54

56

59

come sopra

appassionato

61

ff

63

ff

ff

ff

ff

=

66

ff

ff

ff

ff

=

69

ff

ff

ff

ff

71

=

73 (h)

=

75

=

77 Stamp **f**

Stamp **f**

Stamp **f**

Stamp **f**

79

This musical score page contains four staves, each representing a different instrument or voice part. The top staff is soprano, the second is alto, the third is bass, and the bottom is trombone. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. Measure 77 begins with a dynamic marking 'Stamp f' above the soprano staff. The alto staff has a similar marking below it. Measures 78 and 79 begin with 'Stamp f' markings above the bass and trombone staves respectively. The music consists primarily of eighth-note patterns. In measure 77, sixteenth-note patterns are present in the soprano and alto parts. Measure 78 features sixteenth-note patterns in the bass and trombone parts. Measure 79 continues the eighth-note patterns established in the previous measures. Performance instructions such as '3' over groups of notes are visible in several places, indicating rhythmic groupings of three. Measures 78 and 79 conclude with a double bar line followed by repeat dots, suggesting a section of the piece is being repeated.

81

II

83

68

100% Performance
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14

85 **C**

6 8

78

[2+2+3 sempre]

86

6 8

78

88

7 8 **12** 16 **9** 16

=

90 **9** 16 **6** 16 **5[3+2]** 8 7 8

=

93 **7** 8 **2** 4 **D** **7** 16

16

[2+2+3 sempre]

95

7 16 3 2 4 3 7 16

3 3 3 3 3 3 3

97

7 16 3 6 16 5 16

3 3 3 3 3 3 3

100

5 [2+3] 16 7 16 3 8 16 4 4

3 3 3 3 3 3 3

103 $\frac{4}{4}$

fff

fff

pp sub.

mp express.

=

106

mp

mp

=

108

mp

18

110

E

semplice

=

113

=

117

4

II

19

120

0 III 0 III 0 III 0

sffz *p sub.*

fp

sffz *mp sub.*

sul III *gliss.*

sffz *mp sub.*

123

sffz *mf sub.*

sffz *f sub.*

sul III *gliss.*

sffz *mf sub.*

f *sul II*

gliss.

mf

f

sul III

sffz *f sub.*

gliss.

F

125

F

0 0 0 I sim.

ff *mf sub.*

0 0 0 II sim.

sffz *mf sub.*

0 0 0 II sim.

sffz *mf sub.*

0 0 0 III sim.

sffz *mf sub.*

come sopra

ff *mf sub.*

come sopra

sffz *mf sub.*

come sopra

sffz *mf sub.*

come sopra

sffz *mf sub.*

come sopra

127

II I

ff *mf sub.*

sffz *mf sub.*

ff *mf sub.*

sffz *mf sub.*

sffz *mf sub.*

ff *mf sub.*

sffz *mf sub.*

=

129

III I
IV II sim.

come sopra

ff *f sub.*

sffz *f sub.*

ff *f sub.*

ff *f sub.*

II III sim.
IV III sim.

come sopra

IV II sim.
III I

0 0
come sopra

ff *f sub.*

ff *f sub.*

ff *f sub.*

ff *f sub.*

A musical score page featuring four staves of music. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. Each staff consists of two measures. Measure 1 starts with a dynamic of ff and includes performance instructions like '()' and '3'. Measure 2 starts with ff and includes '()' and '3'. Measure 3 starts with ff and includes '()' and '3'. Measure 4 starts with ff and includes '()' and '3'. Measures 5 and 6 show more complex patterns with various dynamics (ff, f sub., 0), performance instructions (>(), 3), and articulations (dots, dashes). Measures 7 and 8 continue the pattern with ff, f sub., and 0 dynamics.

G

A musical score page featuring four staves of complex rhythmic patterns. The top staff uses treble clef and includes dynamic markings 'ff' and '3'. The second staff uses treble clef and includes dynamic markings 'ff' and 'f sub.'. The third staff uses bass clef and includes dynamic markings 'f sub.'. The bottom staff uses bass clef and includes dynamic markings 'ff' and 'f sub.'. The score consists of six measures, with measure 6 continuing from measure 5. Measure 1 starts with a forte dynamic 'ff' followed by a sixteenth-note pattern. Measures 2-5 show various sixteenth-note patterns with dynamic changes. Measure 6 begins with a dynamic 'f sub.' followed by a sixteenth-note pattern.

22

135

ff

G.P.

4 **4** **sul I e II**

sul II e III

sul II e III

sul III e IV

138

140 **I** II (no gliss.) come sopra **98**

I II (no gliss.) come sopra

I II (no gliss.) come sopra

I II (no gliss.) come sopra

H

142 **98**

I II excessive bow pressure (scratching sound) fully stopped

(gliss.) fff excessive bow pressure (scratching sound) fully stopped

III IV excessive bow pressure (scratching sound) fully stopped

III IV excessive bow pressure (scratching sound) fully stopped

III IV excessive bow pressure (scratching sound) fully stopped

(gliss.) fff excessive bow pressure (scratching sound) fully stopped

(gliss.) fff excessive bow pressure (scratching sound) fully stopped

rit.

— sul pont. — ord. — sul tasto — flautando
 - reduce finger pressure — half-stop — ord. harm.

4
2

I

 $\text{♩} = c. 50$ quasi senza misura

145

4 2

s.t. —> s.p. —>

0 tr (s) : (s) :

pp — p

s.t. —> s.p. —>

0 tr (s) : (s) :

pp — p

s.t. —> s.p. —>

0 tr (s) : (s) :

pp — p

s.t. —> s.p. —>

0 tr (s) : (s) :

pp — p

s.t. —> s.p. —>

0 tr (s) : (s) :

pp — p

col Vlc.
ord.

8va (s) 8va (s)

p — mf — mp

3

col Vln. 1
ord. I

'seagull' effect,
keep same spacing of hand
throughout gliss.

mp — pp

149

s.p.
tr (suono reale)

ord. III
s.p. harm. gliss.

mp *mf* *pp*

keep same spacing of hand throughout gliss.

IV ord. *s.p.* (loco) *3* *p* *mf* *mp* *pp* *ppp*

molto s.p.
tr (suono reale)

p *f* *p* *f* *p*

=

ord. *s.t.*

tr

p *mp*

p *f* *p* *f* *p*

p *f* *p* *f* *p*