

JOEL LEWANDOWSKI

Boom of the Talking Strings

for piano and orchestra

(2002)

and corrected edition by Paul Mann

(2014)

Study Score

ED 22052

PREVIEW

Low Resolution

To Paul Mann with great affection and gratitude

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First performance
15 February 1960, Odense, Denmark

Conductor: Paul Mann

Odense Symphony Orchestra

Nelson Goerner, piano
Conductor: Paul Mann

Recording:

Odense Symfoniorkester
Nelson Goerner, piano
Conductor: Paul Mann

EMI Classics 3905282 (2008)

Piano
by D. H. Lawrence
(1918)

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child.

Composer's note

I began this piece after reading D. H. Lawrence's 1918 poem's depiction of a small boy sitting under the piano as "the great black piano appassionato" – a wonderful phrase – had an enormously strong resonance with my own memories of childhood. In this movement, I wanted to describe the same nostalgic longing for childhood, but in a more sophisticated way. What follows might be seen to depict my journey – and from the piano – towards a mind beyond glances; towards a world beyond Lawrence's "flood of remembrance" and into a brighter future. Although prone to that myself, I wanted to create a more positive world which one perhaps learns from the past rather than lives in it.

Postscript: In 2010, when I had been performed twice, Paul Mann drew my attention to the earlier section of the poem, in which Lawrence's son, Harry, my decision to end the concerto with positive hope and optimism, and with "the great black piano" racing towards a joyful clamorous ending.

Jon Lord

The Piano

Somewhere beneath that piano's superb sleek black
Must hide my mother's piano, little and brown with the back
That stood close to the wall, and the front's faded silk, both torn
And the keys with little hollows, that my mother's fingers had worn.

Softly, in the shadows, a woman is singing to me
Quietly, through the years I have crept back to see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the shaking strings
Pressing the little poised feet of the mother who smiles as she sings
The full throated woman has chosen a winning, living song
And surely the heart that is in me must belong
To the old Sunday evenings, when darkness wandered outside
And hymns gleamed on our warm lips, as we watched mother's fingers

Or this is my sister at home in the old front room
Singing love's first surprised gladness, alone in the gloom
She will start when she sees me, and blushing, spread out
To cover my mouth's railing, till I'm bound in a shame's

A woman is singing me a wild Hungarian
And her arms, and her bosom and the white of her hands
And the great black piano is clamouring at the door, and the Hamlet
And the tunes of the past are dismoured of the gloom

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Boom of the Tingling Strings

for piano and orchestra

Jon Lord
(1941-2012)

I

Adagio maestoso $\text{J} = 48$

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PREVIEW

