

Blue Water

for Violin, Piano and String Quartet

DANIEL OTT

commissioned by Bargemusic
in celebration of the 30th
Anniversary Season

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Blue Water was commissioned by the venerable New York chamber music series Bargemusic, in celebration of its 30th Anniversary Season. The premiere performance took place on 28 March 2008 at Bargemusic, Fulton Ferry Landing, in Brooklyn, N.Y. The performers were Mark Peskanov, solo violin; Doris Stevenson, piano; and the Shanghai Quartet.

The work is cast in seven movements, played without pause. The instrumentation, for a total of six musicians, varies slightly from movement to movement in the following manner:

- I. quartet alone*
- II. all players*
- III. solo violin & quartet*
- IV. piano & quartet*
- V. all players*
- VI. all players*
- VII. solo violin & piano (with quartet joining only at closing)*

The title refers to the nautical term for open seas (as in “blue-water sailing”). The connection to the fact that the premiere took place on a floating concert hall should be obvious, though the “barge” itself remains securely moored!

While not overtly programmatic, Blue Water does at times hint at the barest of programs, tragic in nature, and tinged nearly everywhere with a certain melancholic tone. The image of a sea-journey which does not end well could be construed. In particular, the closing bars depict the image of a drowning man’s final view, his boat slowly rising above him as he sinks, and recall to mind these words of John Donne:

So all were lost, which in the ship were found,
They in sea being burnt, they in the burnt ship drowned.

Beyond that, it is perhaps interesting to note that nearly all the eighteen minutes of music stem from the opening movement, especially the four-note gesture which begins the work, and which seemed to me to evoke the sense of being on the water, a prospect which both fascinates and terrifies.

- D. O.

Blue Water

Daniel Ott (2008)

I.

♩ = 112 *come sopra*

Solo Violin

Violin I
con sord.
p *pp* *• = 72* *accel. al - - - - -* *mp* *pp* *sim.*

Violin II
con sord.
p *pp* *• = 72* *accel. al - - - - -* *mp* *pp* *sim.*

Viola
con sord.
p *pp* *• = 72* *accel. al - - - - -* *mp* *pp* *sim.*

Cello
con sord.
p *pp* *• = 72* *accel. al - - - - -* *mp* *pp* *sim.*

Piano

Vn. I *3* *mp* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *• = 72* *accel. al - - - - -* *p sub.* *mf*

Vn. II *mp* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p sub.* *mf*

Va. *mp* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p sub.* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p sub.* *mf*

6 **Rapidly, but not yet as fast as possible** ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 116$) *poco accel.* - - - *as fast as possible* $\text{♩} = 60$

Vn. I *p sub.* *f* *pp sub.* *f* *pp* *molto*

Vn. II *p sub.* *f* *pp sub.* *f* *pp* *molto*

Va. *p sub.* *f* *f* *pp* *molto*

Vc. *p sub.* *f* *pp sub.* *f* *pp* *molto*

9 **Together**

Vn. I *ff* *sfz* *mf* *f* *ff* *mp* *poco*

Vn. II *ff* *sfz* *mf* *ff* *mp* *gliss.* *poco*

Va. *ff* *sfz* *mf* *ff* *mp* *poco*

Vc. *ff* *sfz* *mf* *ff* *mp* *poco*

13 $\text{♩} = 60$ **Slowly** ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$) (all at same speed but asynchronous) $\text{♩} = 60$ *rit.* - - - - - *attacca*

Vn. I *pp* *p* *pp mor.* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vn. II *pp* *p* *pp mor.* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Va. *pp* *p* *pp mor.* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vc. *pp* *p* *pp mor.* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

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II.

19 **Freely and with feeling**

ad lib. (♩ = ca. 66)

Solo Vn. *p mp p n*

Vn. I *ca. ♩ = 120 pp*

Vn. II *ca. ♩ = 120 pp*

Va. *ca. ♩ = 120 pp*

Vc. *ca. ♩ = 120 pp*

Pno. *p mp crystalline*

Red. l.v. *Red. sempre*

Solo Vn. *n come sopra p mp port. p pp*

Vn. I *come sopra*

Vn. II *come sopra*

Va. *come sopra*

Vc. *come sopra*

Pno. *mp come sopra p*

Red. sempre

mor.

♩ = 52

23 (ord.)

Solo Vn.

Pno.

mp 3 pp mp mf 3 3 3 7 3

28

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

f 3 mp mp p sub. II p sub. II p sub. II mp

senza sord. n mp n mp n p mf p sub. II p sub. II p sub. II mp

senza sord. n mp n mp n p mf p sub. II p sub. II p sub. II mp

senza sord. n mp n mp n p mf p sub. II p sub. II p sub. II mp

mf 3 3 3 3 3 3 8vb

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32

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

p *mf* *n* *mp* *n*

35

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

f *mf* *mf* *f* *f* *mp* *f*

r.h. *3va*

Pno.

Measures 46-49 of the piano part. The right hand features a complex, rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with frequent accidentals. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include accents (>) and a forte (f) marking at the end of measure 49.

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Measures 50-53 for Solo Violin, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The Solo Violin part is silent. Violin I and II play a melodic line starting with a piano (p) dynamic and a *ben marcato* instruction. The Viola and Violoncello parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and triplets. Measure numbers 50, 51, 52, and 53 are indicated at the end of each staff.

Pno.

Measures 50-53 of the piano part. The right hand continues with its intricate rhythmic texture, featuring triplets and a forte (f) dynamic. The left hand maintains its eighth-note accompaniment. Measure numbers 50, 51, 52, and 53 are indicated at the end of each staff.

53 { $\overset{3}{\text{trill}} = \text{trill}$ }

Solo Vn. *mf*

Vn. I *mp*

Vn. II *mp*

Va. *mp*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mp*

Rec.

gva

57

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

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61

Solo Vn. *ff* *sim.*

Vn. I *f*

Vn. II *f*

Va. *f*

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f* *8va* *8vb*

66

Solo Vn. *ff*

Vn. I *ff*

Vn. II *ff*

Va. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Pno. *ff* *8va* *8vb*

70 *accel.* { $\text{♪♪♪} = \text{♪♪♪}$ }

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

8^{va}

15^{ma}

8^{va}

loco

II III

attacca

III.

74 $\text{♩} = 132$

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

ff

mp sub.

f

f

f

f

78

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

ff

mp sub.

f

ff

mf

mp

II
III

84

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

mf precise

sim.

vibr. ----- non vibr.

p

sul pont. ord. (non vibr.)

mf sub.

p

91

Solo Vn. *f*

Vn. I *mf sub.* *p* sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) — — — — — vibr. *f* *p sub.*

Vn. II *mf sub.* *p* sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) — — — — — vibr. *f* *p sub.*

Va. *mf sub.* *p* sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) — — — — — vibr. *f* *p sub.*

Vc. sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) — — — — — vibr. *f* *p sub.*

96

Solo Vn. *mf* *sim.* *ff*

Vn. I *f* sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) vibr.

Vn. II *f* sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) vibr.

Va. *f* sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) vibr.

Vc. *f* sul pont. ord. (non vibr.) vibr.

100

Solo Vn. *f* *ff* *con espressione*

Vn. I *f* *mp* *f* *sfp* *f*

Vn. II *f* *mp* *f* *sfp* *f*

Va. *f* *mp* *f* *sfp* *f*

Vc. *f* *mp* *f* *sfp* *f*

104

Solo Vn. *ff*

Vn. I *sfz* *f*

Vn. II *sfz* *f*

Va. *sfz*

Vc. *sfz*

108

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

ff feroce *sim.*

mp *ff*

f *mp* *ff*

f *mp* *ff*

IV

III

arco

113

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

sfz *mf*

arco *mf* *f* *mf*

arco *mf* *f* *mf*

arco *mf* *f* *mf* *f p* *sempre stacc.*

arco *mf* *f* *mf* *f p* *sempre stacc.*

118

Solo Vn. *sfz* *f*

Vn. I

Vn. II *p* *sempre stacc.*

Va. *sfz* *p* *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *sfz* *p* *sfz* *sfz*

123

Solo Vn. *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *mf* *sfz*

Vn. I *p* *sempre stacc.*

Vn. II *sfz* *p* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Va. *sfz* *p* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Vc. *sfz* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mf*

128

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

sfz *mf* *ff* *ff*

f *mf* *f* *ff* *ff*

133

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

mf *mp*

pizz. *arco sul pont.* *p* *mp* *pp*

sul pont. *mp* *pp*

pizz. *arco sul pont.* *p* *mp* *pp*

sul pont. *mp* *pp*

pizz. *p*

IV.

152 *L'istesso tempo* (♩. = 132)

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

p secco

8^{vb}

158

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

pizz.

p

pizz.

p

pizz.

p

pizz.

p

mp

legg.

8^{vb}

164

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

mf

mf

mf

mf

f

f

f

f

mf

f

170

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mp

mp

mp

mp

p

p

p

p

pp

p

8vb

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176

Vn. I *pp* *f* arco

Vn. II *pp* *f* arco

Va. *p* *f* arco

Vc. *p* *f* arco

Pno. *pp* *f* *sempre stacc.*

183

Vn. I *f* pizz. arco *pp* *ff*

Vn. II *f* pizz. arco *pp* *ff*

Va. *f* pizz. arco *ff*

Vc. *f* pizz. arco *ff*

Pno. *mf legg.* *ova*

187

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

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

8va

193

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

pizz. *p* *f* *p* *f*

arco

200

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

mf

f

mf

8va

sost. *rit.*

206

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

cresc.

mf

cresc.

mf

cresc.

mf

cresc.

ff

8va

f

8vb

212

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

cresc.

ff

cresc.

ff

cresc.

ff

cresc.

ff

8va

218

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

loco

pizz.

arco

8va

8vb

ff

ff

ff

ff

224

Vn. I *ff* *f* *mf* *mp*

Vn. II *ff* *ppp* *mf* *mp*

Va. *ff* *f* *mf* *mp*

Vc. *ff* *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

(8va)

Pno. *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

229

Vn. I *p* *pp* *mp espress.* *pp*

Vn. II *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*

Va. *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*

Vc. *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Pno. *pp* *mf* *pp* *pp*

236

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

attacca

V.

246 {♩ = ♪} (♩. = 44)

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

mournful, like the tolling of bells
ben tenuto

p

poco cresc.

mp

250

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

pp espress. *mf* *pp* *mf*

254

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

mf cantabile

n *mp* *n* *mp*

mp

257

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

n *mp* *n* *n* *n* *n*

259

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

f *f* *f* *f* *f* *f*

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263

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

267

Solo Vn.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno.

con tutta forza

accel. ad lib. al trem.

ff mf ff

fff as fast as possible

f pos. ad lib.

con tutta forza

fff

l.v.

Leo l.v.

269

Solo Vn. *sim.* *f* with lessening intensity

Vn. I *ff* *sim.* *f*

Vn. II *ff* *sim.* *f*

Va. *ff* *sim.* *f*

Vc. *ff* *sim.* *f*

Pno. *ff* *sim.* *f*

8vb

271

Solo Vn. *poco accel.* (no pause) *ca. 5"* *ca. 8"* *rall.*

Vn. I *mf* no longer as fast as possible *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* *n* at some point, pause briefly to apply mute, then return to figure. (con sord.)

Vn. II *mf* no longer as fast as possible (no pause) *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* at some point, pause briefly to apply mute, then return to figure. (con sord.)

Va. *mf* no longer as fast as possible (no pause) *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* at some point, pause briefly to apply mute, then return to figure. (con sord.)

Vc. *mf* no longer as fast as possible (no pause) *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* at some point, pause briefly to apply mute, then return to figure. (con sord.)

Pno. *mf* a rumble (no pause)

VI.

275

Solo Vn. *p* sul pont. 3

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc.

Pno. *pp* 3 3 3 3 *pp* 8va 8vb Red. l.v.

280

Solo Vn. *p* 3 *n* *p* 3

Vn. I sul pont.

Vn. II sul pont.

Va. sul pont.

Vc. sul pont.

Pno. 3 3 3 3 *pp* 3 3 3 3 8va 8vb

VII.

297 *ad lib.* (♩ = ca. 66)

Solo Vn. *pp* *p* *pp* *n*

Vn. I *n*

Vn. II *n*

Va. *n*

Vc. *n*

Pno. *pp* *p icily* *♩ = 112* *8va* *Red. l.v.* *Red. sempre*

Solo Vn. *pp* *n* *pp* *p* *pp* *♩ = 52*

Pno. *p come sopra* *p* *trailing away...* *sim.* *3* *3* *3*

301 *ad lib.* (♩ = ca. 72) *in tempo* *come sopra* *in tempo* *come sopra* *in tempo* *rit.*

Solo Vn. *poco* *pp* *sim.* *sim.* *8va*

Pno. *p* *as if carrying on from before...* *p* *pp*

307 *come sopra* *rit.* *Very slowly* (♩ = ca. 48)

Solo Vn. *p* *pp* *sord.* *n*

Vn. I *sord.* *ppp* *n*

Vn. II *sord.* *ppp* *n*

Va. *ppp* *n*

Vc. *ppp* *rit.* *n*

Pno. *pp* *as if evaporating...* *mor.* *8vb* *fine*

sed. sempre

* Solo violin: Play evenly and independently of others. Do not pause in between measures, but continue at same pace until the end. Final, highest notes *ad lib.*, but try to continue beyond the point at which others reach the last note; drift away like smoke.