

STEPHEN BARCHAN

HOW DOTHTHE LITTLE CROCODILE

for solo soprano

(2013, rev. 2022)

First performance: Alexandra Hutton (soprano)
The Aldeburgh English Song Project
Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme
Aldeburgh Music
Britten Studio
Snape Maltings, Suffolk, UK
2 March 2013

Duration: c.2 minutes

Programme note:

How Doth the Little Crocodile for solo soprano is a setting of the poem recited by Alice in the second chapter of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. The piece lasts approximately two minutes and was composed for The Aldeburgh English Song Project, which formed part of the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme in 2013.

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Text:

How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in,
With gently smiling jaws!

The Annotated Alice
Lewis Carroll, ed. Martin Gardner
(London: Penguin Books, 2001)

HOW DOTH THE LITTLE CROCODILE

LEWIS CARROLL

STEPHEN BARCHAN

“I’ll try and say ‘How doth the little-’,” and she crossed her hands on her lap, as if she were saying lessons, and began to repeat it, but her voice sounded hoarse and strange, and the words did not come the same as they used to do:—

taken aback
mf brightly *mp* *p* unpitched* *mp*

$\text{♩} = 84$

Soprano

How doth the li - tt - le cro - c - o -

becoming more confident
mf *mp* *f* *mf* *mp*

5

-dile Im - prove his sh - i - ning tail, And

rit. $\text{♩} = 72$

9

lavishly *mf* *mp* *mf*

pour the wa - ter - s of the Nile

dreamily *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *becoming overwhelmed*

13

On ev - ery gol - den scale!

* All crossed noteheads are unpitched

17 *f* *mf* *sinisterly* *mp* *p* *mf*

How ch - eer - ful - ly he seems to

22 *mp* *becoming animated* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp* *nasal*

accel. $\text{♩} = 84$ rit.

grin, How neat - ly spreads hi - s c - law - s,

26 *f* *mf* *warmly* *mp* *p*

ord.

$\text{♩} = 72$

And wel - comes lit - tle fish - es

30 *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *ff* *mf*

rit. $\text{♩} = 60$ *becoming sinister* *no vib.* *fast vib.* *ord. vib.*

in, With gent - ly s - mi - ling

34 *p* *mp* *p* *pp* *f*

$\text{♩} = 72$ rit. $\text{♩} = 60$

jaws!

"I'm sure those are not the right words," said poor Alice, and her eyes filled with tears...