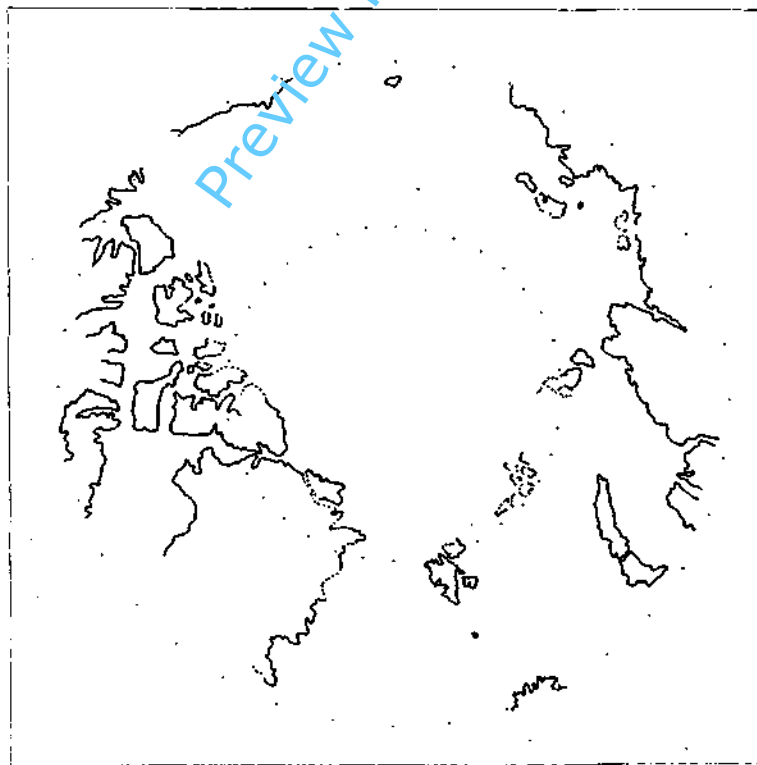


**Michael Parsons**

# **EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH POLE**



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# **EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH POLE**

for MIXED CHORUS S A T B

with soprano and bass-baritone soloists

and PIANO

revised version (1999)

Duration: 30 minutes

**Expedition to the North Pole** was composed mostly between 1984 and 1988, with some revisions and new material added in 1992-93 and further revisions made in 1999. The text is selected and adapted from various sources, the most important of which is *Farthest North* by the Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen (in an English translation published in 1898). This is Nansen's account of his Arctic expedition of 1893-96, in which he describes how with a crew of twelve men in his ship *Fram*, specially built to withstand the pressure of the ice, he sailed from Norway into the Kara Sea, penetrated the frozen Arctic Ocean north of Siberia and drifted westwards with the prevailing current towards Greenland. Nansen reached a record latitude of 86° 13' in a sledge journey from the icebound ship with dogs and one companion, Frederik Johansen, before being turned back by massive ridges of piled-up ice. The Prologue 'Unseen and untrodden...', the passages describing the immensity of the Arctic icescape and the Aurora Borealis ('The whole sky is ablaze...') and the final section before the Epilogue ('Over the icefields there are cold violet-blue shadows...') are all taken from Nansen's book. Other sources include a 12th century Norse text quoted by Nansen, *Kongespielet*, which describes early Viking explorations in the far north (the baritone solo 'As soon as one has traversed the greater part of the wild sea...'), William L. MacKinlay's *Karluk* which tells the story of a ship abandoned in the Arctic ice north of Siberia in 1914, and Robert E. Peary's *The North Pole* (1910). The section 'From shipwreck to have advanced into the midst of impenetrable whiteness...' borrows some phrases from Mallarmé's last poem *Un coup de Dés* (first published in 1897), which is deeply infused with the imagery of Polar exploration.

The music is thus not intended to relate specifically to any single expedition, but rather to give a general impression based on a compilation from different sources, of attempts to reach the North Pole in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The image of shipwreck (in a fragment derived from Mallarmé), for example, is not relevant to Nansen's voyage in the *Fram* (which returned safely to Norway after three years in the Arctic); it might refer to the disastrous Franklin expedition of 1847-48, or to the wreck of the *Jeanette*, crushed in the ice north of Siberia in 1881. The Epilogue (in the composer's own words) reflects upon the inherent uncertainty of any claim to have reached the North Pole at this time, including that of Robert E. Peary in 1909.

These are some of the historical references on which *Expedition to the North Pole* is based. The work celebrates the aspirations and achievements, the failures and ironies of the heroic age of Arctic exploration. Beyond its literal sources, it may also be understood as a metaphor for single-minded, even obsessive dedication in the face of incalculable physical and psychological obstacles to any unknown and possibly unattainable goal.

The first complete performance (apart from the 1999 revisions) was given by the London Concert Choir, conductor Gregory Rose, with Sara Stowe (soprano solo) and Peter Barley (piano) at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, London on 7th July 1993. An earlier version (excluding bars 368 - 459, which were added in 1993) was performed in December 1991 under the title *Farthest North*, by the Elysian Singers of London, conductor Matthew Greenall, with Joanna Natrass (soprano solo) and Andrew Ball (piano).

Note on Epilogue:

In his biography of Peary *The Noose of Laurels* (published in 1989) Wally Herbert has shown beyond reasonable doubt that the explorer Dr. Frederick Cook was never closer than 400 miles to the North Pole during his 1908 expedition, and that Peary was probably about 50 miles from the Pole on 6th April 1909 (the day he claimed to have reached it).

'The North Pole has almost no significance except on the map, where it marks the convergence of the meridians of longitude. In physical reality it is an unmarked and indefinable point in a featureless region of shifting pack ice which circulates clockwise round the Arctic Ocean.'

(adapted from John Dyson: *The Hot Arctic*)

A shorter version of the work may be performed, omitting bars 368-459. In this case, the piano plays the low octave B (3/2 bar, as at fig. S), and the Epilogue follows immediately after this bar.

The duration of this shorter version is about 22 minutes.

## EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH POLE

**PROLOGUE** Unseen and untrodden under their spotless mantle of ice, the rigid polar regions slept the profound sleep of death from the earliest dawn of time. But the limits of the unknown had to recede before the ever-increasing search for light and knowledge, till they made a stand at the threshold of the polar regions, with their endless silence. Nowhere has knowledge been achieved at greater cost of privation and suffering; even now, darkness still rules over vast tracts around the Pole.

Endless icescape, a desert of frozen sea; ghastly grey light as far as the eye can reach.  
Endless icescape, a vast and boundless void, where time and space are dissolved into infinity.

On ever northward, over the desolate ice plains, in search of the unknown spaces and silences of the polar void.

Endless icescape, a desert of frozen sea; ghastly grey light as far as the eye can reach.  
Endless icescape, a vast and boundless void, where time and space are dissolved into infinity.  
Over the desolate ice plains, in search of the unknown spaces and silences of the polar void.

As soon as one has traversed the greater part of the wild sea, one comes upon such a huge quantity of ice that nowhere in the whole world has the like been known. This ice lies far to the north, beyond the limits of land. It lies at times quite still; but sometimes its movement is so strong and rapid as to equal that of a ship running before the wind.

On the threshold of unknown regions unseen and untrodden from the earliest dawn of time; limitless emptiness of infinite space, a fearful wilderness of ice.

Thousands upon thousands of jagged fantastic shapes gleaming and glistening in every conceivable shade of blue.

The whole sky is ablaze with glowing waves of fire, glistening writhing twisting bands of many-coloured light playing over the icefield. Across the whole vault of the northern sky, flickering arches of rainbow colour, coming and going as if driven by a storm, surpassing anything one can dream.

Search in vain for Zero land, mirage dream or illusion; a desert of silence.

Immense masses of ice extending northwards indefinitely; massive upheaved ice boulders, ridge upon ridge to the horizon, aggregated, crushed and disintegrated with continual pressure.

Almost impossible to advance further...

From shipwreck to have advanced into the midst of impenetrable whiteness  
without vessel vain no matter where

to have advanced  
to have reached as far as where  
in endless emptiness  
all reality dissolves

to stagger and to fall  
and thus to perish unknown to the world we have left behind?

In vain to have reached this vacant realm of silence

Nothing to have here achieved

all aspiration void

in this great absence  
to seek and not to find?

Wastelands of vacancy, frozen immobility, silence and oblivion...

Over the icefields there are cold violet-blue shadows,  
with streaks of red catching the last reflection of the vanished day  
High above, deep blue and then infinite space, where no dawn will ever break

What matter if we perish, in the endless cycles of eternity?

This is the world that shall be: the heat of the sun declines,  
glacial epochs come and go, the drifting ice extends ever further southward  
until all the seas of the earth are frozen into oblivion  
the last traces of life disappear...

EPILOGUE      Did they reach the Pole?  
We shall never know  
For though they travelled far and suffered much  
Over shifting ice and treacherous floe  
through fog and mist and blinding snow

There is no way to know how near they came  
to their indefinable goal  
No point, no place  
but only drifting ice in endless Arctic space

text selected and adapted from *Farthest North* by Fridtjof Nansen  
and other sources

# EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH POLE

Michael Parsons

for MIXED CHORUS SATB with soprano and bass-baritone soloists  
and PIANO

## PROLOGUE

*♩ = 28* *mf*

Sopranos  
Altos  
Tenors  
Basses

Un - seen and un - trod - den un - der their spot - less man - tle of

*mp sustained*

P

5

S.  
A.  
T.  
B.

ice, the ri - gid po - lar re - gions slept the pro - found sleep of death from the ear - li - est dawn of

ice, the ri - gid po - lar re - gions slept the pro - found sleep of death from the ear - li - est dawn of

ice, the ri - gid po - lar re - gions slept the pro - found sleep of death from the ear - li - est dawn of

ice, the ri - gid po - lar re - gions slept the pro - found sleep of death from the ear - li - est dawn of

♩ P P P simile

10

S. *mf* time. But the li-mits of the un-known had to re-cede be-fore the

A. *mf* time. But the li-mits of the un-known had to re-cede be-fore the

T. *mf* time. But the li-mits of the un-known had to re-cede be-fore the

B. *mf* time. But the li-mits of the un-known had to re-cede be-fore the

*mp*

14

S. *mp* e-ver in-creas-ing search for light and know-ledge, till they made a stand at the thresh-old of the po-lar re-gions,

A. *mp* e-ver in-creas-ing search for light and know-ledge, till they made a stand at the thresh-old of the po-lar re-gions,

T. *mp* e-ver in-creas-ing search for light and know-ledge, till they made a stand at the thresh-old of the po-lar re-gions,

B. *mp* e-ver in-creas-ing search for light and know-ledge, till they made a stand at the thresh-old of the po-lar re-gions,



18

S. with their end - less si - lence.

A. with their end - less si - lence.

T. with their end - less si - lence.

B. with their end - less si - lence. *mp* No-where has know-ledge been ach - ieved at great-er

22

S. *f* dark-ness still broods o-ver

A. *mf* c - ven now, *f* dark-ness still broods o-ver vast tracts a - round the

T. *f* dark-ness still broods o-ver

B. *mf* cost of pri - vat - ion and suff-er-ing; *f* e - ven now, dark-ness still broods o-ver vast tracts a - round the

27

S. vast tracts a-round the Pole.

A. Pole.

T. vast tracts a-round the Pole.

B. Pole.

*p* *pp*

A

33  $\text{♩} = 72$

*p* *mf* *p*

8<sup>va</sup>

43

*mf* *p* *p*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

52

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

loco

(8<sup>va</sup>)

**B**

61 (♩ = 36) *divisi mp very sustained*

S. End - less ice - scape, a de - sert of fro - zen sea;

A. *divisi mp* End - less ice - scape, a de - sert of fro - zen sea;

T. *mp* End - less ice - scape, a de - sert of fro - zen sea;

B. *mf very sustained* End - less ice - scape,

*pp*

66

S. gha - st - ly grey light as far as the eye can reach.

A. gha - st - ly grey light as far as the eye can reach.

T. gha - st - ly grey light as far as the eye can reach.

B. *mf* a de - sert of fro - zen sea.

(86)

C

73 (♩ = 72) (♩ = 86) *mf*

S. End - less

A. End - less

T. End - less

B. *mf* End - - - -

*p* *p* *cresc.* *mf* *mp*

(84)

80 *cresc.* *f*

S. ice - scape, a vast and bound - less void, where time and space are dis -

A. ice - scape, a vast and bound - less void. where time and space

T. ice - scape, a vast and bound - less void, where time and space

B. less ice - - - scape, a vast

*mp*

(84)

D

(♩ = 72)

85

S. *mp* - solved in - to in - fi - ni ty.

A. *mp* are dis-solved in - to in - fi - ni ty.

T. *mp* are dis-solved in - to in - fi - ni ty.

B. *f* and bound - - - less *mf* divisi void.

*mf*

(84)

Slower (♩ = 60)

90

*pp*

*p*

(86)

E

con moto, deciso

(♩ = 96)

97

*p*

loco

107

S.

A.

T. *f risoluto*  
On, e - ver north-ward, o - ver the de - so - late

B. *f risoluto*  
On, e - ver north-ward, o - ver the de - so - late

114

S. *mf* *f*  
O - ver the de - so - late ice — plains, —

A. *mf*  
O - ver the de - so - late ice — plains, — ice —

T. ice — plains, —

B. ice — plains, —

*mp* *cresc.* *mf*

F

121

S. ice plains, on.

A. plains, on, e-ver north-ward,

T. o-ver the de-so-late ice plains, on, e-ver north-ward,

B. on, e-ver north-ward,

dim. p f

128

S. e-ver north-ward, o-ver the de-so-late ice plains.

A. o-ver the de-so-late ice plains, ice

T. o-ver the de-so-late ice plains.

B. o-ver the de-so-late ice plains.

mf

135

S. *f* o - ver the de - so - late ice

A. plains. — o - ver the de - so - late

T. o - ver the de - so - late ice plains. —

B.

141

S. plains. — ice plains —

A. ice — plains. — *mf* o - ver the de - so - late *dim.* ice — plains. —

T. o - ver the de - so - late ice plains. —

B. o - ver the de - so - late ice plains. —



G

148

S.

A.

T. 
  
in search of the un-known spa-ces and

B. 
  
in search of the un-known spa-ces and si-len-ces

*mf*

153

S. 
  
of the po-lar void.

A. 
  
of the po-lar void. of the po-lar void.

T. 
  
si-len-ces of the po-lar void, of the po-lar void.

B. 
  
of the po-lar void. of the po-lar void.

*cresc.* *f* *rall.* *molto*

**H**

160 *d = 56* Sopranos *mf* very sustained

S. End - less ice - scape, a de - sert of

*sfz*

*mp sostenuto*

*poco sfz*

*P*

165

S. fro - zen sea. Ghast - ly grey light as

*f*

*P* *P* *P simile*

*sfz*

170

S. far as the eye can reach.

*mf*

*P*

174 *mf* *cresc.* *f* *dim.*

S. End - less ice scape, a vast and bound - less void.

*P*

179 *mf* *mp*

S. where time and space are dis-solved in - to in - fi - ni - ty.

(8<sup>th</sup>)

184 **I** *p* *mf*

S. O-ver the de-so-late ice plains.

(8<sup>th</sup>)

188 *mf* *mp*

S. o-ver the de-so-late ice plains. in search of the un - known.

(8<sup>th</sup>)

192

S. spa-ces and si-len - ces, in search of the un - known spa-ces and

(8<sup>th</sup>)

195 *P* *pp*

S. *si - len - ces* *of the po - lar void.*

8va

8va

loco

*ppp*

*pp*

(30)

**J**

198  $\text{♩} = 56$  SOLO BASS-BARITONE *mf*

SOLO BASS-BAR. *As soon as one has tra - versed*

*mp*

206

SOLO BASS-BAR. *the great - er part of the wild sea, one comes u - pon such a huge quan - ti - ty of*

*mp*

212

SOLO BASS-BAR. *ice that no - where in the whole world has the like been known. This ice lies*

*mp*

219

SOLO BASS-BAR.

far to the north beyond the li-mits of land. It lies at times quite

226

SOLO BASS-BAR.

still, but some-times its move-ment is so strong and ra-pid

*cresc.*

232

SOLO BASS-BAR.

as to e-qual that of a ship run-ning be-fore the wind.

*f* *dim.*

K

239  $\text{♩} = 48$  *mf* *3* *divisi* *f* *very sustained*

S. On the thresh-old of un-known re-gions. un-seen and un-trod-den

A. On the thresh-old of un-known re-gions. un-seen and un-trod-den

T. On the thresh-old of un-known re-gions. un-seen and un-trod-den

B. On the thresh-old of un-known re-gions. un- - - - seen and un-

*mp* *mf*

Pedal throughout...

243 *mf* *3* *3* *ff* *3* *3* *ff* *3* *3* *f*

S. from the ear-li-est dawn of time; li-mit-less emp-ti-ness of in-fi-nite space,

A. from the ear-li-est dawn of time; li-mit-less emp-ti-ness of in-fi-nite space,

T. from the ear-li-est dawn of time; li-mit-less emp-ti-ness of in-fi-nite space,

B. trod-den (r) li - - - mit-less emp - - - ti-

*mf*

(84)

247 *mp cresc.* *mf* *mp*

S. a fear-ful wil-der-ness of ice.

A. a fear-ful wil-der-ness of ice.

T. a fear-ful wil-der-ness of ice.

B. -ness of in-fi-nite space.

*mp*

*mf*

(8<sup>o</sup>)

**L**

252  $\text{♩} = 76$  *con moto* Sopranos *mp*

S. Thou-sands u-pon thou-sands of jag-ged, fan-tas-tic

A. Thou-sands u-pon thou-sands of jag-ged, fan-tas-tic shapes

Altos *mp*

*p legato* *cresc.* *mp*

*loco*

255 *mf*

S. shapes glea-ming and glis-te-ning in eve-ry con-cei-va-ble

A. glea-ming and glis-te-ning. glea-ming and glis-te-ning in eve-ry con-cei-va-ble shade of blue.

*cresc.* *mf*

*cresc.* *mf*

258

S. shade of blue.

A.

dim. p (l.h. sopra) accel. cresc.

**M**

261  $\text{♩} = 84$  SOLO SOPRANO *mp*

SOLO SOP. The whole sky is a - blaze with

*fp subito* (scintillando)

\* P

263 *mf*

SOLO SOP. glow - ing waves of fire. glis - ten - ing, wri - ting, twist - ing bands of ma - ny co - loured

*p* *cresc.* *cresc.*

*simile* *cresc.*

\* P \* P \* P \* P \* P \* P

265 *cresc.* *p subito*

SOLO SOP. light playing o - ver the ice - field.

*p subito* *p*

\* P \* P \* P \* P \* P



268 *mp* *mf*

SOLO SOP. A - cross the whole vault of the north-ern sky flick - er - ing arch - es of rain - bow co - lour

*cresc.* *mf*

\* P

270 *f*

SOLO SOP. com - ing and go - ing as if dri - ven by a storm.

*cresc.*

\* P \* P \* P \* P \* P

272

SOLO SOP.

*f* *sf p* *loco*

\* P \* P \* P \* P \* P simile

274 *mp*

SOLO SOP. sur - - - pas - sing a - ny - thing one can dream.

*(p)*

276

SOLO SOP.

(m)

depress silently with both palms

release keys

(chromatic cluster)

(release pedal gradually)

**N**

279  $\text{♩} = 66$  Basses

pp

cresc.

mp

pesante

286

*f* harsh

Search in vain for Ze-ro land, mi-rage, dream or il-

*mf*

293

*mf*

lus-ion, mi-rage, dream or il-lus-ion;

*mf*

cresc.

300  $\text{♩} = 96$  *f* *ten.* *mp*

B. a de - sert of si - lence.

*rit.* *f* *p*

*loco* *simile*

307

B.

*pp*

**O** 314  $\text{♩} = 56$  *f* *very broad and sustained*

S. Im - mense mas - ses of ice ex - ten - ding north - wards in - de - fi - nite - ly; —

A. Im - mense mas - ses of ice ex - ten - ding north - wards in - de - fi - nite - ly; —

T. Im - mense mas - ses of ice ex - ten - ding north - wards in - de - fi - nite - ly; —

B. Im - mense mas - ses of ice ex - ten - ding north - wards in - de - fi - nite - ly; —

$\text{♩} = 72$  (with greater momentum)

318

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

S. mas-sive up - heaved ice boul - ders, mas-sive up - up - heaved ice

A. mas-sive up - heaved ice boul - ders, mas-sive up - up - heaved ice

T. mas-sive up - up - heaved ice boul - ders, mas-sive up - heaved ice

B. mas-sive up - up - heaved ice boul - ders, mas-sive up - heaved ice

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

divisi

divisi

divisi

divisi

321

S. boul - ders, ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

A. boul - ders, ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

T. boul - ders, ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

B. boul - ders, ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

divisi

divisi

divisi

divisi

325

S. ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

A. ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

T. ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

B. ridge u - pon ridge to the ho - ri - zon,

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

*f*  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$   $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$

divisi

divisi

divisi

divisi

P

328

S. *f* ag-gre-ga-ted, *ff* 3 crushed and dis-in-te-gra-ted,

A. *f* 3 crushed and dis - - - in-te-gra-ted, *ff* 3 crushed and dis-in-te-gra-ted,

T. *f* 3 crushed and dis-in-te-gra-ted, *ff* 3 crushed and dis-in-te-gra-ted,

B. *f* ag-gre-ga-ted, *ff* 3 crushed and dis-in-te-gra-ted.

331

S. *f* ag-gre-ga-ted, *f* 3 crushed and dis - - - in-te-gra-ted,

A. *f* 3 crushed and dis - - - in-te-gra-ted,

T. *f* ag-gre-ga-ted, *f* 3 crushed and dis - - - in-te-gra-ted,

B. *f* ag-gre-ga-ted, *f* 3 crushed and dis - - - in-te-gra-ted,

334 *ff accented*

S. *ff* crushed and dis - in-te-gra-ted

A. *ff* crushed and dis - in-te-gra-ted

T. *ff* crushed and dis - in-te-gra-ted *f* 3 with con-ti-nu-al

B. *ff* crushed and dis - in-te-gra-ted *f* 3 with con-ti-nu-al pres-sure.

338 Q

S. *f* with con - ti - nu - al pres - sure.

A. *f* with con - ti - nu - al pres - sure, con - ti - nu - al pres - sure.

T. pres - sure, with con - ti - nu - al pres - sure. *ff* Al -

B. *ff* *pesante* with con - ti - nu - al pres - sure. Al - most im - pos - si - ble to ad -

343

S. *ff* Al - - - most im - pos - si - ble

A. *ff* Al - - - most im pos - si - ble to ad - vance fur - ther,

T. most im - pos - si - ble to ad - vance fur - ther, to ad - vance,

B. vance fur - ther. to ad - vance,

347 *Allargando*

S. to ad - vance fur - ther,

A. to ad - vance fur - ther.

T. to ad - vance fur - ther, to ad - vance

B. to ad - vance, to ad - vance fur - ther.

R

351  $\text{♩} = 66$

*ff* *f* *mf*

P \*P (4)  $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$   $\text{♩}$

356

*mp* *p* *cresc.* *molto* *ff* *dim.* *mp*

*loco* *simile*

\*P \*P \*P \*P \*P \*P

363 *(loco)* *rall.*  $\text{♩} = 84$

*f* *p* *p* *mp*

*p loco*

(8) \*P \*P P \*P \*P

S

368  $\text{♩} = 66$

S. To have ad-vanced in - to the midst of im  
 A. To have ad-vanced in - to the midst of im  
 T. To have ad - vanced in - to the midst of im  
 B. From ship - wreck in - to the midst of im -

*p*  
 (p)

S. - pe - ne - tra - ble white - ness with - out ves - sel vain - no  
 A. - pe - ne - tra - ble white - ness with - out ves - sel vain, vain,  
 T. - pe - ne - tra - ble white - ness with - out vessel vain, vain, vain,  
 B. - pe - ne - tra - ble white - ness with - out ves - sel vain, vain,

S. mat - ter where in end - less  
 A. vain as far as where  
 T. vain to have reached where  
 B. vain to have ad - vanced where



383

S. *pp* emp - ti - ness, emp - ti - ness all re - a - li - ty dis solves —

A. *mf* in end - less emp - ti - ness *pp* all re - a - li - ty dis solves —

T. *mf* in end - less emp - ti - ness *pp* all re - a - li - ty dis solves —

B. *pp* all re - a - li - ty dis - solves —

U

389 Basses *f pesante*

B. To stag - ger — and — to fall and thus to pe - rish — un - known to the

395 Altos

A. *mf* In — vain — to have reached this va - cant realm of si - lence?

B. world we have left be - hind?

V

401 SOLO SOPRANO

SOLO SOP. *mf* All as - pi - ra - tion — void —

S. *pp* No - thing to have here a - chieved in this great ab - sence

A. *pp* No - thing to have here a - chieved in this great ab - sence

T. *pp* No - thing to have here a - chieved in this great ab - sence

B. *pp* No - thing to have here a - chieved in this great ab - sence

406 *rall.*

SOLO SOP.

S. *pp* void *p* to seek and not to find?

A. *pp* void *p* to seek and not to find?

T. *pp* void *p* to seek and not to find?

B. *pp* void *p* to seek and not to find?

**W**

412 *A tempo*  $\text{♩} = 66$  *Slightly faster* *mp*

SOLO SOP.

S. *pp* waste-lands of va-can-cy, fro-zen im-mo - bi - li - ty, si-lence and ob - li - vi - on *mp* O - ver the

A. *pp* waste-lands of va-can-cy, fro-zen im-mo - bi - li - ty, si-lence and ob - li - vi - on *mp*

T. *pp* waste-lands of va-can-cy, fro-zen im-mo - bi - li - ty, si-lence and ob - li - vi - on *mp*

B. *pp* waste-lands of va-can-cy, fro-zen im-mo - bi - li - ty, si-lence and ob - li - vi - on *mp*

416  $\text{♩} = c. 72$

SOLO SOP.

S. ice - fields there are cold vio - let blue sha - dows with streaks of *pp* cold *sf* sha - dows

A. *pp* cold *sf* sha - dows

T. *pp* cold *sf* sha - dows

B. *pp* cold *sf* sha - dows

420 *cresc.* *mf* *rit.*

SOLO SOP. red. — cat - ching the last re - flec - tion of the va - nished day.

S. last va - - - nished

A. last va - - - nished

T. last va - - - nished

B. last va - - - nished

X

424  $\text{♩} = 66$  *P* *(h)*

SOLO SOP. High a - bove, deep blue, and then in - fi - nite space, where no dawn will e - ver

S. (u) (pp)

A. (u) (pp)

T. (u) (pp)

B. (u) (pp)

(u) . . . . .

*Faster - quasi recit.* *mf*  $\text{♩} = 72$

SOLO SOP. break. What mat - ter if we pe - rish, in the

S. *dim.* *PPP* *PP* *PPP* humming (b.c.) in - fi - nite space pe - rish

A. *dim.* *PPP* *PP* *PPP* humming (b.c.) in - fi - nite space pe - rish

T. *dim.* *PPP* *PP* *PPP* humming (b.c.) in - fi - nite space pe - rish

B. *dim.* *PPP* *divisi* *PP* *PPP* humming (b.c.) in - fi - nite space pe - rish

436 *cresc.* *f* *rit.*

SOLO SOP. end - - - less cy - cles of e - ter - ni - ty?

S. *pp* e - ter - ni - ty?

A. *pp* e - ter - ni - ty?

T. *pp* e - ter - ni - ty?

B. *pp* e - ter - ni - ty?

Y

442 *A tempo*  $\text{♩} = 66$  *mp*

SOLO SOP. This is the world that shall be: the heat of the sun de-clines,

S. *ppp* *molto sostenuto* humming (b.c.)

A. *ppp* *molto sostenuto* humming (b.c.)

T. *ppp* *molto sostenuto* humming (b.c.)

B. *ppp* *molto sostenuto* humming (b.c.)

446

SOLO SOP. gla - - cial e - pocs - - - come - and go, the drif - ting ice ex - tends

S. *(ppp sempre)* (b.c.)

A. *(ppp sempre)* (b.c.)

T. *(ppp sempre)* (b.c.)

B. *(ppp sempre)* (b.c.)

450

SOLO SOP.

e - ver fur - - - ther south - ward un - til all the seas of the earth are

S. *pp poco cresc.* Drif - - - ting e - - - ver south - ward are

A. *pp poco cresc.* Drif - - - ting e - - - ver south - ward are

T. *pp poco cresc.* Drif - - - ting e - - - ver south - ward are

B. *pp poco cresc.* Drif - - - ting e - - - ver south - ward are

454

SOLO SOP.

fro - zen, — the last tra - ces of life dis - ap - pear — a niente

S. *pp* fro - zen in - (n) - to ob - li - *ppp* - vi - on - (n). a niente

A. *pp* fro - zen in - (n) - to ob - li - *ppp* - vi - on - (n). a niente

T. *pp* fro - zen in - (n) - to ob - li - *ppp* - vi - on - (n). a niente

B. *pp* fro - zen in - (n) - to ob - li - *ppp* - vi - on - (n). a niente

*rit.* *Slower* (♩ = 56)

(Long pause before Epilogue)

## EPILOGUE

Z

♩ = 96

460 *p*

S. Did they reach the Pole? We shall ne - ver know For though they tra - velled far

A. Did they reach the Pole? We shall ne - ver know For though they tra - velled far

T. Did they reach the Pole? We shall ne - ver know For though they tra - velled far

B. Did they reach the Pole? We shall ne - ver know For though they tra - velled far

466

S. and suf - fered much O - ver shif - ting ice and trea - che - rous floe

A. and suf - fered much O - ver shif - ting ice and trea - che - rous floe

T. and suf - fered much O - ver shif - ting ice and trea - che - rous floe

B. and suf - fered much O - ver shif - ting ice and trea - che - rous floe

472 *p*

S. through fog and mist and blind - ing snow There is no way to know

A. through fog and mist and blind - ing snow There is no way to know

T. through fog and mist and blind - ing snow There is no way to know

B. through fog and mist and blind - ing snow There is no way to know

478

S. how near they came to their in - de - fi - na - ble goal No point,

A. how near they came to their in - de - fi - na - ble goal No point,

T. how near they came to their in - de - fi - na - ble goal No point,

B. how near they came to their in - de - fi - na - ble goal No point,

484

*pp*

S. no place but on - ly drif - ting ice in end - less Arc - tic space.

*pp*

A. no place but on - ly drif - ting ice in end - less Arc - tic space.

*pp*

T. no place but on - ly drif - ting ice in end - less Arc - tic space.

*pp*

B. no place but on - ly drif - ting ice in end - less Arc - tic space.