



EP 7533

# DILLON

RESIDUE...

Double Choir

Score

James Dillon

Preview File Only

*residue . . .*

*for Double Choir*

*SATB*

*(24 voices)*

*1998 - 99*

*Edition Peters*

*London Frankfurt New York*

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Residue...

for Double Choir

SATB

(24 Voices)

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### Comments:

There should be no attempt to bring out the semantic strictures of the text. What links the two texts one in Hebrew the other French, is a play with allegory and the residual traces of 'otherness' which emerges from the commentaries and speculation gathered around a text. What has been called in relation to the poet Edmond Jabes' work a kind of "delirium of meaning". In the Hebrew Canticles 'The Song of Songs' - which could be translated as 'The Residue of Residues' - due to the particular characteristics of the Hebrew alphabet - the allegorical themes of sexual/sacred love, represents marriage as a union between ideas and knowledge upon which for example the Kabbalistic tradition of 'commentary' has generated much mystical speculation. It is thought by certain scholars that the verses date back to Abraham and a pre-Jewish *Chaldean* period where knowledge was seen as direct experience devoid of mysticism. The poet Robert Graves has spoken of an even older and pagan source for these verses which emphasises the hallucinogenic aspect of ritual and meaning. The tradition has been further explored by the marriage in Jabes of [Mallarme's] meaning/absence and a form of allegorical commentary around the idea of the [endlessly folding] book. The superposition of text and music creates an inevitable and simultaneous marriage/ divorce of meaning. Here the linguistic structures of a text, its grammatical, intonational and phonetic aspects are subjected to musical demands; a ritual which renders tensions 'beyond' any original semantic strictures.

In *residue* ... there are no desires to 'set' the text, one intention is to move beyond such boundaries and explore a sound landscape created by this collision of text and music. However the choice of text is not simply the source of vocal colour but is also one form of resonance - like the palimpsest what remains is a 'residue' of structure. The Song of Songs has been cited as the basis for much of the Western cult of the dame, which came through the Middle East from the *Sajal* singers to the troubadours who flourished around the twelfth century.

#### *1. ...with a glance*

imagines a sound texture its position and initial qualities - here an 'assemblage of voice' organised as probalistic and non-repetitive movement; more complex than the individual elements - oscillates internally and suspends the impression of an initial impulse.

*"you have ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace."*

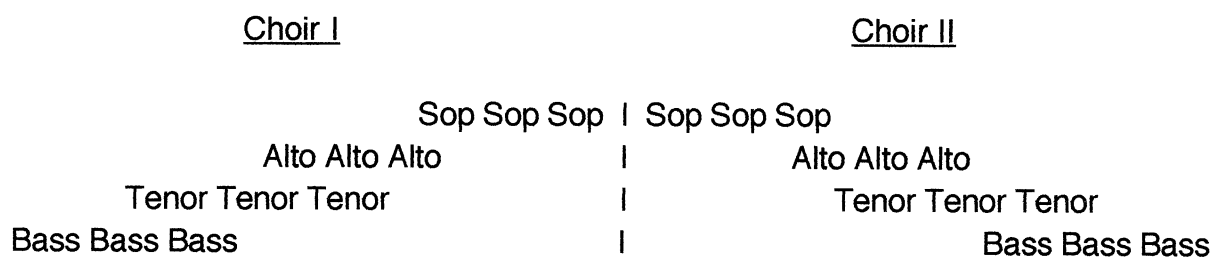
#### *2. Dancers who dream*

Like a series of *freeze-frames* the sound-image here is of a slow ritual, which governs a number of repetitions - a slow drift of permutations.

*"Dancers who dream yourself sisters of the dawn,"*

*Stage Layout :*

Arranged as a wide arc



Performance notes:

To be sung with the absolute minimum of vibrato.

Spatial layout (see above) should always be followed.

- ‡ a quarter-tone sharp
- ## three quarter-tones sharp
- ♭ a quarter-tone flat
- ♭♭ three quarter-tone flat
- whisper
- whistle
- shout
- / cancels previous instruction.

*residue* . . . was commissioned by **Westdeutscher Rundfunk**, Köln for the 1999 Witten Festival. The first performance was given by the **SudWestdeutscher Rundfunk Vokalenensemble** of Stuttgart on the 28th April 1999 at the Witten Festival, Germany.

TEXT:

Is based upon fragments from two sources *Canticles: The Song of Songs* ( in Hebrew) and *L'Absence de Lieu* ( in French) by Edmond Jabés

Hebrew [ phonetics ] :

*Levatini Ahhoti Kalah Lebvavtini Be'ehhad Me'aynaykh Be'ehhad Aanaq  
Mi'tsavronaykh.*

English trans:

[ You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride, you have ravished  
My heart with a glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace. ]

*Quamiti Ani Le'pitoahh Le'dodi We'yadai Nat-foo-Mor We'etsbeotai Mor Eebar Aal  
Kapot Ha'mano'ol.*

English trans:

[ I arose to open my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, upon the handles of the  
bolt. ]

*Mi-Zot Ha'nishqafah Kemo-Shahhar Yafah Khal-vanah Ayomah K'nidgalot.*

English trans:

[ "Who is this that looks forth like the dawn, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an  
army with banners?" ]

*Hessevi Aynayekh Me'neghedti She'hem Hirhiboni Shaarekh Ke-eder Ha'ayzeem  
Shegalshoo Min Ha'ghilaad.*

English trans:

[ Turn away your eyes from me, for they disturb me - Your hair is like a flock of goats, moving  
down the slopes of Gilead. ]

from *The Song of Songs*

*Le ciel est toujours à traverser et  
la terrasse à nourrir de nuits nouvelles.*

English trans:

[ The sky is always to cross and  
foreground to be fed with new nights. ]

*Le chemin est sans indulgence pour qui  
s'en détourne.*

English trans:

[ The road has no pity for those  
who turn off. ]

*Danseuses qui rêvez d'être les soeurs de l'aurore,  
valsez dans du miracle avec la ruoe des robes  
en soleillées.*

English trans:

[ Dancers who dream yourselves sisters of the dawn,  
waltz to the oblivion of miracle, wheeling dresses  
sunlit. ]

From *L'Absence de lieu*

Preview File Only

1. ...with a glance

to Harry Vogt

Preview File Only



♩ = 138

RALLENTANDO MOLTO .....

*ppp*

*mp - mf\**

**CHOIR I**

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

♩ = 138

RALLENTANDO MOLTO .....

*ppp*

*mp - mf\**

**CHOIR II**

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

\* Small, continuous variations of dynamic between mp - mf - ad lib.





