

the boy
forest
& the desert

theatre piece for singers, actors and actor-musicians (2008/2011)

Kim B Ashton

Dramatis Personae: Narrator (baritone), an old man
Woman (soprano), offstage
Boss (countertenor), crazed entrepreneur
Boy (spoken role), the protagonist
Girl (spoken role)
Actors (five; mute)

Instrumentation: Flute
Bassoon
Percussion (snare drum, bass drum, suspended cymbal, radio white noise)
Violin
Viola
Cello

Words by Wendell Berry, Ryokan and the composer

Score: in C

Duration: c.25'

Programme note: There are three levels of narrative at work in *the boy the forest and the desert*: that of the narrator, who tells the story from the outside, that of the boy protagonist, who experiences it from the inside, and that of the offstage soprano, who in three songs presents a more abstracted commentary or response to the events. It's a very simple story: a boy walks into the woods in search of knowledge, but finds desecration where he hoped to find truth.

the boy the forest and the desert

to the land where the bong-tree grows

Kim B Ashton
08 rev 11

bassoon starts onstage (amongst trees)

Calm, ♩ = 66

Flute

Bassoon

Viola

pp

mp warm

mp warm

mp warm

pizz.



[cedez...]

7

Fl

Bsn

Vla

p

mp

mp

p

mp

arco

255 **S** $\text{♩} = 82$ Radio white noise

Perc H 0 10 10 *mp* 5

N *mf marcato* *f*
 Mid- night, the boy woke and could not sleep. To his sur-prise and un

b << i wake up in the night... the stars whirling in the sky... wait... these people are...
 extreme bow pressure

Vc *f. molto marc.*



259 stick hit and choke

Perc H *f* *p* *mf* *mp* *mf*

N ease, he re-al-ized. that these men were chil-dren, their ma-chines were con-struct

b children... their great contraptions... tattered scraps...

Vc *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.*

262

Bsn

Perc

N

b

Vla

Vc

ed from rubb- ish. They would ne- ver take him home.

They're rubbish!

push over some machines angrily

hi-hat

choke

arco

extreme bow pressure

pizz.

arco

ff

(11)



266

Fl

Bsn

Perc

b

Vln

Vla

Vc

ff

mf

f

mf

no snare

<<Nothing to do but walk.

poco sul pont.

pizz.

arco

ff

sul pont.

agitato

vib.

bow pressure

[bow pressure ord.]

5

269

Fl

Bsn

Perc

Vln

Vla

Vc

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

arco

3 5 6 5

3 5 10 1 3



272

Fl

Bsn

Perc

Vln

Vla

Vc

f *sempre ff* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *mf* *mp* *mf* *f*

pont/bow pressure play

pizz.

arco

3 5 3 3 3 5

276 32

Fl

Bsn

Perc

Vln

Vla

Vc

pizz. arco pizz.

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

poco sul pont.

ord.

rim

molto sul pont.



U Song of the mountain
(Still, ♩ = 76)

279

Fl

Bsn

Perc

b

Vln

Vla

Vc

p

ppp

1 4 0

<<At last. Out of the desert, a mountain.

ord. *p* *pp*

pizz. *pp*

pizz. *sempre ff* *pp*

ff *mp*