JOHN PICKARD

IN SEA-COLD LYONESSE
The legend of the submerged city of Lyonesse dates back to Arthurian times when it was associated with the story of Tristan and Iseult. Though geographically vague in the early literature, the legend eventually came to be associated with the lost Cornish town of Lethowsow, which some believed to lie submerged between Land’s End and Scilly. Lyonesse is just one of several sunken cities encountered in Celtic legend; the Welsh version is Cantre’r Gwaelod in Cardigan Bay, while the Bretons have the legend of the city of Ys (the inspiration for Debussy’s famous piano Prélude La cathédrale engloutie).

From Tennyson to Sylvia Plath, the story of Lyonesse has inspired many writers and poets. This work sets poems by Thomas Hardy (When I set out for Lyonesse) and Walter de la Mare (Sank Lyonesse), the latter embedded between the second and third verses of the former.

For this particular piece, the story of Lyonesse seemed especially appropriate, for the work was specifically designed to be performed by three groups of musicians, two on the Cornish mainland and one on the Isles of Scilly, all playing simultaneously and all connected in an online environment. Towards the end, the brass on the mainland and the woodwind on Scilly call to each other across the sea, their music conveyed via a fibre-optic cable running across the sea-bed and - who knows? - perhaps through the streets of the submerged city itself. Thus, modern technology and ancient myth meet.

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Instrumentation

Group 1
4 Woodwind parts (any combination of Flutes, Oboes or Clarinets; doubling is encouraged)
The present score provides a realisation for 4 flutes.

Group 2
8 Brass parts (any combination of instruments, giving a full range from low to high; doubling is encouraged)
The present score provides a realisation for 10 brass band instruments.

Group 3
Percussion: Tam-tam and Suspended Cymbal (1 player)
Female Choir or Children’s Choir
Strings

The work is designed for performance in an online environment using superfast broadband. Each of the groups is physically separated and the conductor is also physically isolated, conducting to camera, so that each group sees the beat simultaneously. Each group hears the other two groups slightly behind the conductor’s beat. Where possible, this delay (latency) should be adjusted using a latency patch applied to the software. The latency should be set so that the delay is extended to a full crotchet beat in length. The music is designed to ensure that, while the alignment of the groups is different in each location, the musical experience remains valid wherever it is heard.

The work can also be performed without the use of broadband technology, with the groups either physically separated (and, if necessary, separately conducted) or all together on the same stage as a conventional concert performance.
repeat independently in free rhythm
When I set out for Ly--rosse, A hundred miles a--
Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Fl. 3

Fl. 4

Sop. Cnt.(Eb)

2 Cnt. (Bb)

2 Ten. Hn. (Eb)

2 Trb (Bb)

2 Euph. (Bb)

E Bass

Bb Bass

Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

way, The rime was on the spray, And star light - lit my lone-some - ness When I set out for Ly - on - esse. A

way, The rime was on the spray, And star light - lit my lone-some - ness When I set out for Ly - on - esse. A

way, The rime was on the spray, And star light - lit my lone-some - ness When I set out for Ly - on - esse. A
Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Fl. 3
Fl. 4

Sop. Cnt. (E)
2 Cnt. (B)
2 Ten. Hn. (E)
2 Trb (B)
2 Euph. (Bb)

Eb Bass
Bb Bass

Perc.

S.

A.

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

hundred miles away
What would be chance at Lyon-esse
While I should so journ

hundred miles away
What would be chance at Lyon-esse
While I should so journ

p
f
pp

muted

p
f

muted

p
f

muted

p
f

muted

p
f

muted

p
f

muted

p
f

muted

p
f

muted

mp

pizz.
there No pro -phet durst de -clare, Nor did the wis - est wiz -ard guess What would be chance at Ly -on-esse While
I should so journ there.

I should so journ there.
esse, When the Sab-bath eve shafts down
From the roofs, walls, bel - fies of the found - ered
Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Fl. 3
Fl. 4

Sop. Cnt. (Eb)
2 Cnt. (Bb)
2 Ten. Ha. (Eb)
2 Trb (Bb)
2 Euph. (Bb)

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Perc.

lyres Where the green transparency beats,
And with motion less
eyes at gaze Make minstrelsy in the streets.

eyes at gaze Make minstrelsy in the streets.
Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Fl. 3

Fl. 4

Sop. Cnt. (Eb)

2 Cnt. (Bb)

2 Ten. Hn. (Eb)

2 Trb (Bb)

2 Euph. (Bb)

E Bass

Bb Bass

Perc.

S.

A.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

And the ocean water stirs

And the ocean water stirs

unis.

ppp legatissimo

poco f

poco f

sul tasto repeat the same pattern independently

sul tasto repeat the same pattern independently

sul tasto repeat the same pattern independently

sul tasto repeat the same pattern independently

Suspended cymbal
salt - worn case - ment and porch, Plies the blunt nosed fish With fire in his skull for
And the ringing wires re-sound, And the unearthly love by
weep, In la ment of the mu sic they make In the sul len courts of sleep.
When I came back from Ly on esse With

When I came back from Ly on esse With
magic in my eyes, All marked with mute surmise—my radiance rare— and In-thom-los, When I came back from...
Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Fl. 3

Fl. 4

Sop. Cnt. (Eb)

2 Cnt. (Bb)

2 Ten. Hn. (Eb)

2 Trb (Bb)

2 Euph. (Bb)

Eb Bass

Bb Bass

Perc.

Ly - on - esse With ma - gic in my eyes!

A

Ly - on - esse With ma - gic in my eyes!

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

solo