

Adam Spry

Norse:

The Northern Lights

September 2022

PERFORMANCE NOTES

any italicized text is an expression marking and not a lyric to be sung. Any grace note should be thought of as an inflexion, rather than an ornamentation. In any overtone vowel singing, each performer should slowly change their vowels at a consistent rate, with that rate being decided by the performer. With any rhythmic spoken passages, rubato should be used to give a more natural feel to the rhythmic speaking. Same applies to any lighter sprechgesang. The more the performer is singing during these passages, the less rubato should be used.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Norse: The Northern Lights was inspired by an 11th century text called *Konungs skuggsjá*, a text about a father talking to his son about several different political and philosophical topics. The passage used in the piece is of the father talking to his son about the Northern Lights, and this piece reflects the mystery, love, fear that people of that era would feel towards the Northern Lights, as they were much less understood at that time. Throughout the piece, the text is heard in both English and its original Old Norse language.

To actually emulate the Northern Lights inside the piece, several inspirations of both traditional Sami yoiking, mixed with more contemporary techniques from Shoenberg, Stockhausen, and Ligeti to create an experimental mix of the two sides of inspiration. As well as this, the piece aims to mix traditional Norse sounds and culture with modern techniques in other places, with humming, speaking and sprechgesang all being utilised throughout in sung lyrical passages, and more alien sounding passages.

-Adam Spry

Duration: ca. 5'

Norse: The Nothern Lights

Adam Spry

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

spoken:

f But as to that matter which you have often inquired about, what those lights can be which the Greenlanders call the northern lights,
grand

p I have no clear knowledge.

humming

2

Andante con peso ♩ = c. 92

S.

A.

T. *grounded, brooding*

B. *humming*

p *grounded, brooding*

6

S.

A.

T. spoken:

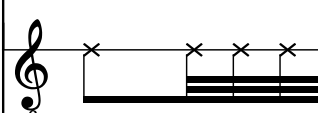
mf I have of - ten met men who have spent a long time in Green-land, but they do not seem to

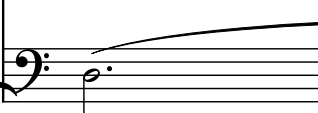
B.

8

S. _____

A. _____

T. 
 know def - in - it - ely what those lights are.

B. 

10

S. _____

A. _____

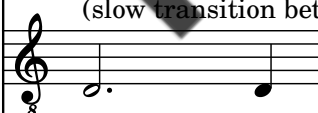
T. 
p [ɑ:]

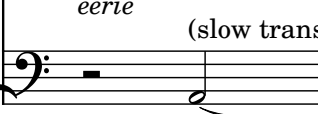
B.  [ɑ:]

14

S. _____

A. _____

T. 
 (slow transition between vowels)
 [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:] - [ø:] [ɑ:] - [y:] - [ø:] - [u:] - [ɔ:] -

B. 
 (slow transition between vowels)
 [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:] - [ø:] - [ɑ:] - [y:] - [ø:] - [u:] -

eerie

18

S. _____

A. _____

T. humming ,

B. humming ,

[y:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] - [m] *mf*

[ɔ:] - [y:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] - [m] *mf*

21

S. _____

A. _____

T. _____

B. spoken:

f How-ev-er it is true of that sub-ject as of ma-ny oth-ers of which we have no sure know-ledge

23

S. _____

A. _____

T. _____

B. light sprechgesang

that thought - ful men will form o - pin - ions and con-ject-ures a - bout it and

25

S. *divine*
pp
 bæim þy-cki þa
 /θæim/ /'θy-ki/ /θa/

A.

T.

B. *3* *3* *3* *3*
 will make such gues - ses as seem rea - son - ab - le and like - ly to be true

27

S. *f* *p* *f* *pp*
 wæ - ra bæim þy-cki þa wæ - ra að - ra þa sæm
 /'wæ - ra/ /θæim/ /'θy-ki/ /θa/ /'wæ - ra/ /'að - ra/ /θa/ /sæm/

A. *divine*
p *f* *p* *mp* *f*
 bæim þy-cki þa wæ - ra að - ra þa sæm mænn tu
 /θæim/ /'θy-ki/ /θa/ /'wæ - ra/ /'að - ra/ /θa/ /sæm/ /mænn/ tu/

T.

B.

30

S. *mp*
 mænn wi-tu sannz at wit-rir
 /mæn/ /'wi-tu/ /sants/ /at/ /'wit-rir/

A. *p*
 [m] [ɑ:] sannz at wit-rir
 /sants/ /at/ /'wit-rir/

T. *p*
 [m] [ɑ:] [m] [ɑ:] [u:] - [ø:] - [y:]

B. *p*
 [m] [ɑ:] [m] [ɑ:] [u:] - [i:]

34

S. overtone singing, slow transition between vowels
p *formidably supernatural*
 [u:] - [y:] - [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [i:] - [æ:] -

A. overtone singing, slow transition between vowels
p *formidably supernatural*
 [u:] - [y:] - [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [i:] - [æ:]

T. overtone singing, slow transition between vowels
p *formidably supernatural*
 [u:] - [y:] - [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ø:] - [ɑ:]

B. overtone singing, slow transition between vowels
p *formidably supernatural*
 [u:] - [y:] - [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ø:]

37

S. [a:] [i:] - [ø:]

A. [a:] [e:] - [ø:]

T. [o:] [a:] - [ø:]

B. [a:] - [o:] [y] - [ø:]

40

S. *pp* [a:] - -

A. *pp* [a:] - - [æ:] -

T. *f* But These north - ern lights have this pe - cu - li - ar na - ture, *mystical*

spoken: heavy sprechgesang

pp [a:] - -

42

S. [æ:] - [i:] - [u:] - [i:] - [u:] - [i:] - [u:] - [i:] -

A. [i:] - [u:] - [i:] - [u:] - [i:] - [u:] -

T. 8 that the dar - ker ³ the night is the brigh - ter they seem; and

B. - [æ:] - [i:] - [u:] - [i:] - [u:] - [i:] - [u:] -

44

S. [u:] - [ø:] - [o:] - [ɑ:] *mf*

A. [ø:] - [o:] - [ɑ:]

T. 8 they al - ways app - ear ³ at night but ne - ver by day *f* overtone singing [ɑ:] -

B. [i:] - [u:] - [ø:] - [o:] - [ɑ:] *f*

46

S. *f* [ɛ:] [i:]-[ɛ:] [i:] - [ɛ:] - [i:] - [ɛ:]-[øɥ] - [ɛ:] [ɑ:] - [æ:] - [i:] [ɛ:] *p*

A. *f* [ɛ:] [i:] - [ɛ:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] - [øɥ]-[ɛ:] [ɔ:] - [æ:] - [i:] *p*

T. [ɛ:] [i:]-[ɛ:] - [i:]-[ɛ:] - [i:] - [ɛ:]-[øɥ]-[ɛ:] [ɑ:] - [æ:] [i:] [ɛ:] [u:]-[ɛ:] - *p*

B. *f* [ɛ:] [i:]-[ɛ:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] - [øɥ] - [ɛ:] [ɔ:] - [æ:] *p*

50

S. [u:] - [ɛ:] - [o:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]

A. [ɛ:] [u:] - [ɛ:] - [o:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]

T. [o:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:] *falsetto*

B. *f* spoken: most fre-quent - ly in the dens - est dark-ness and rare - ly by moon - light

52

S. *f* [o:] — [æ:] - [o:]-[a:] [ɛ:] - [i:] - [ø:] [i:] -

A. *f* [o:] — [æ:] - [o:]-[a:] [ɛ:] - [i:] [ø:] —

T. *f* [o:] — [æ:] — [o:]-[a:] [ɛ:] - [i:] [ø:] [i:] - [o:] -

B. *f* [o:] — [æ:] - [o:] [a:] [ɛ:] - [i:] [ø:] [i:] - [o:] —

55

S. [o:] - [æ:]-[a:] [o:] - [o:] - [æ:] - [ɛ:] - [i:]-[ɛ:]-[øy] - [ø:] - [o:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] -

A. [i:]-[o:] - [æ:]-[a:] [o:] - [o:] - [æ:] - [ɛ:] - [i:] - [ɛ:]-[øy]-[ø:] - [o:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] -

T. [æ:]-[a:] [o:] - [o:] - [æ:] - [ɛ:] - [i:]-[ɛ:]-[øy] - [ø:] - [o:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] - [æ:] -

B. — [æ:]-[a:] [o:] - [o:] - [æ:] - [ɛ:] - [i:]-[ɛ:]-[øy] - [ø:] - [o:] - [i:] - [ɛ:] -

59

S. *p*
- [æ:] - [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]

A. *p*
- [æ:] - [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]

T. *p*
- [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]

B. *p*
[æ:] - [ɑ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]

humming

gliss.

proud

63

S.

A.

T. *mp* proud
humming

B. *mp*

gliss.

gliss.

67

S.

A.

T. *sprechgesang*
 8 In app - ear - ance they re - sem - ble a vast flame of fire viewed.
wistfully

B. *gliss.* *gliss.*

70

S. *p*
 as if _____

A. *p*
 as if _____

T. *singing*
 8 from a great dis - tance it al - so looks as if sharp points were shot

B. *gliss.*

73

S. *mf* from this flame up *fp* sky *mp* [jɑ:]

A. *mf* from this flame up *fp* sky *mp* [jɑ:]

T. 8 from this flame up in - to the sky [m] [ɑ:]

B. *gliss.* [ɑ:]

76

S. *p* 5/4
bwi /θwi/

A. *p* 5/4
bwi /θwi/

T. *p* 5/4
bwi /θwi/

B. spoken:
f The light is very changeable. Sometimes it appears
to grow dim, as if a black smoke or a dark fog were
blown up among the rays; 5/4

77

S. *mp*
 lic - azt at sæm þat se bu - it
 /'lɪk - atst/ /at/ /sæm/ /θat/ /sɛ/ /bu - it/
grounded

A. *p*
 lic - azt at at slok - na
 /'lɪk - atst/ /at/ /'slok - na/
grounded

T. *p*
 lic - azt at
 /'lɪk - atst/ /at/

B. *pp* *p*
 lio - sit kwæ - fiz þa
 /'li - sɪt/ /'kwæ - fɪts/ /θa/

79

S. *mf*
 sæm þat se _____ bu - it
 /sæm/ /θat/ /sɛ/ _____ /bu - it/

A. *mf*
 at slok - na
 /at/ /'slok - na/

T. *mp* *mf*
 sæm þat se bu - it sæm þat se _____ bu - it
 /sæm/ /θat/ /sɛ/ /bu - it/ /sæm/ /θat/ /sɛ/ _____ /bu - it/
grounded

B. *mf*
 í beim re - yc
 /i:/ /θeim/ /'rø - yk/

82

S. *pp*
 en swa er bæ - tta
 /ɛn/ /swa/ /ɛr/ /'θæ - ta/

A.
 brig - ðil - igt lios at þat þy - ckir brig - ðil - igt
 /'brɪg - ðɪl - ɪgt/ /'lɪos/ /at/ /θat/ /'θy - kɪr/ /'brɪg - ðɪl - ɪgt/

T. *f*
 spoken:
 and then it looks ve-ry much as if the light were o-ver-come by this smoke and a - bout...

B. *pp*
 en swa er bæ - tta en swa er bæ -
 /ɛn/ /swa/ /ɛr/ /'θæ - ta/ /ɛn/ /swa/ /ɛr/ /'θæ -
 grounded

84

S. *f*
 stunn - dum wæ - - ra
 /'stun - dum/ /wæ - - ra/

A. *mf*
 docq - va - re
 /'dɒk - va - rɛ/

T. *f*
 — to be quenched.

B. *f*
 tta
 ta/

86

S. *mf* docq - va - re *p* [u:] - [ø:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]
 /'dɒk - vɑ - rɛ/ *erie*

A. *p* bæim þy - cki þa wæ - ra [ø:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]
 /θæim/ /'θy - ki/ /θɑ/ /'wæ - rɑ/ *erie*

T. *mf* docq - va - re *p* sannz at wit - rir *erie*
 /'dɒk - vɑ - rɛ/ /sants/ /ət/ /'wit - rɪr/

B. *mf* docq - va - re
 /'dɒk - vɑ - rɛ/

90

S. *mp* oc sæm þat kwof tæ -
 /ɒk/ /sæm/ /θæt/ /kwɒf/ /tæ -
omnipotent, inhuman

A. *mp* oc sæm þat kwof tæ -
 /ɒk/ /sæm/ /θæt/ /kwɒf/ /tæ -
omnipotent, inhuman

T. *mp* oc sæm þat kwof tæ -
 /ɒk/ /sæm/ /θæt/ /kwɒf/ /tæ -
omnipotent, inhuman

B. *mf* but as soon as the smoke be - gins to grow thin - ner the light be -
 proud

94

S. *f* *mp* *f*
 cr at by - nna ba tæ-cr bat li - os
 kr/ /at/ /'θy - na/ /θa/ /'tæ-kr/ /θat/ /'lɪ - os/

A. *f* *mp* *f*
 cr at ba ba tæ-cr bat li - os
 kr/ /at/ /θa/ /θa/ /'tæ-kr/ /θat/ /'lɪ - os/

T. *f* *p*
 cr at ba ann -
 kr/ /at/ /θa/ /'an -

B. *f*
 gins to bright-en a - gain and it ha-ppens

99

S. *mp*
 si - nni [ɔ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]
 /sɪ - nɪ/

A. *mp*
 si - nni [ɔ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:] -
 /sɪ - nɪ/

T. *f* *mp*
 at [ɔ:] - [ɔ:] - [ɑ:]
 at/

B. *f* *mp*
 at times that peo-ple think they see large sparks shoo-ting

102

S. gnei - - - stum
/'gnei - - - stum/

A. gnei - - - stum
/'gnei - - - stum/

T. humming
8 gliss. f just been tak - en

B. out of it as from glow-ing iron which from the
f

106

S. sfz sfz fff
mo - nnum sy - niz
/'mo - num/ /'sy - nrits/

A. sfz sfz fff
mo - nnum sy - niz
/'mo - num/ /'sy - nrits/

T. sfz sfz fff
mo - nnum sy - niz
/'mo - num/ /'sy - nrits/

B. forge sfz sfz fff
mo - nnum sy - niz
/'mo - num/ /'sy - nrits/

111

S. *pp* in an undertone
[u:]

A. *pp* in an undertone
[u:]

T. *pp* in an undertone
[u:]

B. spoken:
f But as night declines and day approaches, the light begins to fade;
and when daylight appears, it seems to vanish entirely.