

Full Score

An Elm We Lost

for tenor and baritone soloists, SATB chorus and orchestra

David Gompper

Program Notes

An Elm We Lost, written during the summer of 2002 in various locations including Sion, Vienna and Banff, was a commission from the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center in Cedar Falls, Iowa. I incorporate two texts by Marvin Bell, poet laureate for the state of Iowa: *An Elm We Lost* and *Catalog with Illustrations*. The former poem creates a structural framework, and the latter is embedded into the middle of the composition, as a reflection—a moment in time—and sung by the two soloists. In setting the poem, I took Marvin's short poem, fragmented the lines and presented the textural phrases starting from the end and working in reverse. My composition is a threnody—a lamentation—intended to commemorate the first anniversary of the events of 11 September 2001. This is reflected in the music by step-wise descending thirds, a spondaic rhythm (long-long) in the coda with a further fragmentation of the poem, presenting only the nouns and verbs, sung as a hoquet in turn by the two soloists (the twin towers) and chorus (those lost to us, like the dead). I owe a debt of gratitude to Beverly Everett, who suggested the initial idea of the work and its instrumentation, and which led to its eventual commission.

An Elm We Lost

On it we wrote a little essay
about who loved who.
Shade moves in the grass, never still,
and they still do.

Catalog with Illustrations

The beauty of an old desk blotter where ink stains grew into the shapes
of ships in a turbulent ocean,
and the ticking of the clock in the sunlight thickened by dust.
The clacking of the typewriter keys, the big zipper sound of the
carriage return,
and the sound of the struck bell muffled in the drapes.
The air was rich with time, when there was still time.
The letter ripened slowly in the typewriter.
The minute hand took a second to move one digit.
Under the glass that covered the desktop, a map and family photos.
-Marvin Bell (used with permission)

Instrumentation

Percussion I —

Crotales (upper octave)
Glockenspiel
Chimes (Tubular Bells) - middle C plus the full upper octave needed
2 Suspended Cymbals (high, medium)
2 Tam-tams (medium, low)

Percussion II —

Marimba (4-1/3 octave) - B2 up to the highest C
Vibraphone

Percussion III —

(2) Timpani - 29" & 32", or 26" & 32", depending on individual drum ranges
crotales (use perc I)

Harp

Piano

Tenor and Baritone solo

SATB Chorus

Strings (ideal is 6,6,4,4,3; possible minimum is 3,3,3,2,2)

Duration: 12'

An Elm We Lost

Marvin Bell

David Gompper
(2002)

$\text{♩} = 60$ Quiet, flowing

The score is for a 4/4 piece in G major. The percussion section includes Glockenspiel (Glock.), Crotales, and Marimba (4 and 1/3 octave). The harp and piano parts are marked with *sfz* and *l.v.*. The piano part includes instructions: "mute with l.h.", "pluck with fingernail on string", and "(f.n.)". The string section includes Violin I (6), Violin II (6), Viola (4), Violoncello (4), and Contrabass (3). The string parts are marked with *pp* and *p*. The harp and piano parts have lyrics: "suone reale", "près de la table", "suone reale", and "nat.".

*if the pianist is an unseasoned ensemble player, ask them to play these attacks (through bar 29) the same as found in bar 1. All E's should sound similar to the harp, not completely muted and dead, but with a ring. It is best if the left index finger presses directly on the string at the bridge, closest to the player (just beyond the tuning pins). Note to strings: it might be best to ask for a slight non-vibrato, almost Baroque-style, esp. at the beginning, for too much vibrato will have a tendency to cover the chorus.

4 7 Glock. Glock. Crotales Glock. Glock.

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp *p.t.* *nat.* *p.t.*

Pno. *+* *(f.n.)* *+*

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II *(div.)* *unis.* *div.*

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

13 A Crotales Glock. Glock. Crotales 5

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp nat. p.t.

Pno. (f.n.) + (f.n.)

Tnr.

Bar.

S. *p* legato Do still do

A. *p* legato Do still

T.

B.

A (div.) unis. *p* (∩V) (∩V)

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.

Vc. *p*

Cb.

6 19 Glock. Glock. Crotales Glock.

Perc.I

Perc.II *mp* *p*

Timp.

Harp *nat.* *p.t.*

Pno. *+* *(f.n.)* *+*

Tnr.

Bar.

S. *poco* *mp*
 and they still do and they still do still do and they still do

A. *mp*
 Do still do they still and they still do do still and they still do still ne - ver still

T. *p* *mp*
 Still they do still do and they

B. *p* *mp*
 and they

Vln.I

Vln.II *(nv)* *mp*

Vla *mp*

Vc. *(-o)* *nat.* *mp*

Cb. *mp*

24 Glock. Crotales Glock. Glock. 7

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp nat. p.t.

Pno. (f.n.) l.v. + (f.n.)

Tnr.

Bar.

S. *p*
still do ne-ver still ne-verstill in the grass moves in the grass

A. *p*
still do ne-ver ne-ver still grass ne-ver in the grass in the grass

T. *p*
still do still do and they still ne-verstill grass ne-ver moves in

B. *p* *mp*
and they still do ne-ver still, moves the

Vln.I *p* *mp*

Vln.II *p* *mp* *p*

Vla *p* *mp* *p* pizz.

Vc. *p* *mp*

Cb. *p* *mp*

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp

Pno.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf *p*

cresc. *mf*

cresc. *mf*

cresc. *mf*

cresc. *mf*

p

pizz.

mp

the grass moves ne-ver the grass moves ne-ver still, shade moves and they still

Shade moves in the grass and they still do, still do

the grass Shade moves in the grass and they still do, still do

grass and they still do shade moves in the grass moves

Perc.I *p*

Perc.II *p pp f*

Timp. *mp*

Harp *sfz p f sim.*

Pno. *f*

Tnr.

Bar.

S. *p f*
do Shade moves in the grass

A. *p f*
Shade moves in the grass

T. *p f*
Shade moves moves in the grass

B. *f*
the grass in the grass

Vln.I *p f*

Vln.II *p f*

Vla *mp f*

Vc. *arco [11] 1. pizz sfz [9] altri f sfz*

Cb. *mp 1: pizz f altri: arco f*

12 47

Perc.I

Perc.II *with cello 1. pizz.*

Timp. *diminuendo*

Harp A# Db D# *dim.* D#

Pno. *ff* Ped.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I *dim.*

Vln.II *dim.*

Vla.

Vc. *arco, sp* *pizz* *arco* *s.p.* *pizz* *ff*

Cb. *sfz* *sfz*

Perc.I

Perc.II *to vibraphone*

Timp. *ff* *pp* *move to crotales* *ppp*

Harp *E^b* *A^b*

Pno. *

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II *dim.*

Vla. *ord. arco* *dim.* *p*

Vc. *mp* *dim.* *p*

Cb. *dim.* *p*

14 57 **B** ♩ = 120

Perc.I

Perc.II **Vibraphone**
p
motor off, non-sustaining (pedal each note)

Perc.III

Harp
p

Pno.
p
Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

B ♩ = 120

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.
pp

Vc.
pp

Cb.
pp

rall.



♩ = 80

63 Perc.I Chimes *f* *gradually dampen*

Perc.II *f* *l.v.* Crotales *f* *l.v.*

Perc.III *f* *l.v.*

Harp *f* *l.v.* Ab B \flat B \flat

Pno. *f* *Red.* 8va

Tnr. recitative *mf* *3* *3*

Bar. recitative The beau-ty of an old desk blot-ter

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I *mute* *pp* *divide equally between all violins*

Vln.II *mute* *pp*

Vla. *mute* *pp*

Vc.

Cb.

Perc.I *l.v.*

Perc.II *l.v.*

Perc.III *l.v.*

Harp *l.v.*

Pno. *l.v.*

Tnr. *(faster)* *(articulate)*

Bar. *(faster)*

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla

Vc.

Cb.

clock by dust the big zip-per sound of the

clock in the sun-light thick-ened by dust The clack-ing of the type-writ-er keys,

8^{va}

8^{va}

Ped.

D Tempo I ♩ = 60

18 79

Perc.I *l.v.*

Perc.II *l.v.*

Perc.III *l.v.* [move to timpani] *p*

Harp *l.v.* *p*

Pno. *8va* *Ped.*

Tnr. *3* (tempo) car-riage re-turn, and the sound of the struck bell muf-fled in the

Bar. *3* (tempo) (pure tone) car-riage and the sound of the struck bell muf-fled in the drapes

S.

A.

T.

B.

D Tempo I ♩ = 60

Vln.I unis. *mp*

Vln.II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

Cb. *mp*

E

82

Perc.I *crotales*

Perc.II *l.v.*

Timp.

Harp *E_b* *A_b* *f* *mf* *8^{va}*

Pno. *p* *mp* *8^{va}*

Tnr. *mf*

Bar. *mf*

S.

A. *p*

T. *p*

B.

drapes and the sound of the bell The air was rich with

and the sound, muf-fled in the drapes The air was rich with

The

The

E

Vln.I *mp* *6* *6* *6*

Vln.II *mp* *6*

Vla. *mp* *6* *6* *6* *6*

Vc. *mp*

Cb. *div (1, 2+3)* *mp*

20 85

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp

Pno.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

time when there was still

air was rich with time when there was still time

air was rich with time when there was still time

6

B \flat

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp

Pno.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

time The air was rich with

rich The air was

The air was rich with

air was rich with time with time

time The air was

The air was rich with time when

sim.

pizz

6 6 6 6

6 6 6 6

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp

Pno.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

time when there was still time The

rich with time when there was still

time when there was still time The

The air was rich with time the air was rich with time,

rich with time when there was still still time

there was still time The air was rich with time

arco

26 97 **F** ♩ = 60

2 sus cymbals (high, medium)
2 tam-tams (medium, low) *l.v.*

Perc.I

Perc.II **Marimba** *ppp* *(sim)*
p dry *p*

Timp.

Harp *mp* *mf* *mp* F#

Pno. *pu f* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

Tnr. *freely* *a tempo*
slow-ly in the type-writ-er

Bar. *3* *3* *3*

S.

A.

T.

B. *The let - ter ri-pened slow*

Vln.I *pizz.* *mp* *mf* *p*

Vln.II *pizz.* *mp* *mf* *p*

Vla. *mute off* *pizz.* *mf* *mp* *p*

Vc. *mute off* *pizz.* *mf* *mp* *p*

Cb. *mf* *mp* *p*

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp

Pno.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf

G#4

D#4

mp

mf

Eb

Bb

mp

freely

3

a tempo

3

f

3

The min-ute hand took a se-cond to move un-der the glass

to move one di - git

p

p

p

p

pizz.

p

Perc.I *l.v.*

Perc.II *l.v.*

Timp.

Harp *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *l.v.*

Pno. *Ped.*

Tnr.

Bar. *a map*

that co-vered the desk-top — and fam - ily pho - tos —

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Perc.I

Perc.II *nat.*
mp *mp* *mp*

Timp.

Harp *p*
A4

Pno. *p*
Red. *Red.*

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I *f* *dim.* *p*

Vln.II *f* *dim.*

Vla. *f* *arco* *p* *cresc.* *simile*

Vc. *f* *dim.* *p*

Cb.

Perc.I

Perc.II *mp* *cresc.*

Timp. *ppp* *cresc.* **Timpani**

Harp

Pno. *cresc.*

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I arco *p* *cresc.*

Vln.II *p* *cresc.*

Vla. *p* *cresc.*

Vc. *pp* *cresc.* *tasto arco*

Cb. *tutti (pizz)* *p* *cresc.* *nat. arco*

P (sounds percussive)

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp

Pno.

Tnr.

Bar.

S.

A.

T.

B.

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla

Vc.

Cb.

normal

(1) pizz.

(2) arco

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

Perc.I

Perc.II

Timp.

Harp

Pno.

Tnr. *f*
a - bout es - say a - bout who loved .

Bar.
a lit - tle a - bout who loved .

S.
a - bout a lit - tle es - say a - bout who loved .

A.
a - bout a lit - tle es - say a - bout who loved .

T.
a - bout a lit - tle es - say a - bout who loved .

B.
a - bout a lit - tle es - say a - bout who loved .

Vln.I

Vln.II

Vla

Vc.

Cb.

Perc.I *sus. cym.* *pp* *f* *l.v.*
 Perc.II *p* *f*
 Timp. *pp* *mf*
 Harp *f*
 Pno. *f*
 Tnr. *f*
 Bar. *f*
 S. *cresc.* *f*
 A. *cresc.* *f*
 T. *cresc.* *f*
 B. *cresc.* *f*
 Vln.I *cresc.* *f*
 Vln.II *cresc.* *f*
 Vla. *arco* *cresc.* *f*
 Vc. *arco* *cresc.* *f*
 Cb. *arco* *f*

on it we wrote on it we
 on it we wrote on it we
 a-bout who a-bout a lit-tle es - say on it we wrote a
 a-bout who a-bout a lit-tle es - say on it we wrote on it we
 a-bout who a-bout a lit-tle es - say on it we wrote on it we
 a-bout who a-bout a lit-tle es - say on it we wrote on it we

Perc.I
 Perc.II
 Timp.
 Harp
 Pno.
 Tnr.
 Bar.
 S.
 A.
 T.
 B.
 Vln.I
 Vln.II
 Vla.
 Vc.
 Cb.

still still _____ wrote who
 grass ne-ver still ne-ver es - say loved

J

Perc.I

Perc.II *mf* *dim.* *p*

Timp.

Harp *mf* *dim.*

Pno. *mf* *dim.* *p*

Tnr. *8* still do shade moves grass still

Bar. still shade moves grass still

S. *p* we wrote who loved a - bout who

A. *p* we wrote who loved a - bout who

T. *8* *p* we wrote who loved a-bout who loved

B. *p* we wrote who loved a-bout who loved

J

Vln.I *mp*

Vln.II *mp*

Vla *mp*

Vc. *mf* *dim.* *1.* *mp* *pizz.*

Cb. *mf* *dim.* *altri* *p* *fast bow speed* *arco*

p

(high) *p* *f* *l.v.* tam-tam

Perc.I *f* *l.v.* *mf*

Perc.II *f* *loco*

Timp.

Harp *f* *dim.*

Pno. *f* *loco* *p*

Tnr. *f*

Bar. *f*

S. *f* *dim.*

A. *f* *dim.*

T. *f* *dim.*

B. *f* *dim.*

Vln.I *f* *dim.* *p*

Vln.II *f* *dim.* *p*

Vla. *f* (div.) *dim.* *unis.* *p*

Vc. *f* *dim.*

Cb. *f* *dim.*

loved who loved loved loved loved

wrote a - bout who *f* loved, loved, loved, loved

wrote a - bout who *f* loved who loved, who loved, who loved

wrote a - bout who *f* loved loved loved loved

wrote a - bout who loved loved loved loved

1.v.

Perc.I

Perc.II

Vibraphone *dry*

p > > *sim.*

Timp.

Harp

p *sfz* *p*

Pno.

Tnr.

Bar.

who

S.

p <> *sim.*

who Shade grass moves

A.

p <> *sim.*

who Shade grass moves

T.

p <> *sim.*

who moves still do

B.

p <> *sim.*

who moves still do

Vln.I

mp 1. solo

Vln.II

mp 1. solo

Vla

mp 1. solo

Vc.

mp 1. solo

Cb.

p

poco cresc.

poco cresc.

poco cresc.

poco cresc.

