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September: Mt. Carrigain

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**SEPTEMBER:
MT. CARRIGAIN**

for soprano voice and string quartet

ABOUT THIS PIECE

Mt. Carrigain is a 4,683-foot peak in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, which I climbed in September 2014. It was my 43rd of New Hampshire's 48 peaks over 4,000 feet, the last before my worsening health made this kind of hiking no longer possible. This piece will be included in *Ill on a Journey*, a multilingual opera/oratorio about navigating life with chronic illness.

I began climbing these mountains as a child
back then I set a goal to one day know them all
when I got sick so many goals had to be abandoned
and yet I held onto this

Signal Ridge Trail is a rocky spine ascending through evergreens
soaked in mist, clothed in moss and mushrooms
although I've never been here, somehow I feel at home

today it's not too difficult to hold my head up straight
today my vision is clear
today the grip of pain is loose enough to move
this is as good as I can feel
as good as I'll ever feel

Signal Ridge Trail is laced with slippery tree roots
sending me stumbling— ankles twisting—
my body knows I want to leave it and bites the rock in despair

taking a break, out of breath, we tell each other
"The view will be sublime, when the clouds lift!"
but the clouds never lift
they swirl around the firetower
in wind threatening to tear us away
refusing to allow even a glimpse of the green beyond

heading down
knees also refuse to obey
blood turned spiky as the trail

paper birch, I am a foreigner in your home now
will you kindly steady me?

—Rebekah Driscoll, 2017

PERFORMANCE NOTES

s.p. *sul ponticello*



Airy tone: mute with left hand, use fast bow speed and light pressure, without completely obscuring the pitch.

n *niente*, as quietly as possible



Crunch bow: use slow bow speed and increasingly heavy pressure, distorting the tone.

Accidentals carry through the bar.

Duration: c. 7 minutes.

20

I got sick so ma-ny goals had to be a-ban-doned

airly tone

pp *n* *pp*

airly tone

pp *n* *pp*

airly tone

pp *n* *pp*

s.p.

pp *mf*

25

and yet I held on to this

mf *p*

n *pp*

n *pp*

n *pp*

ord.

pp

38

clothed in moss and mush - rooms. _____ al-

pp *mp* *n* *pp* *mp*

42

poco accel.

though I've ne-ver_ been_ here some - how I feel at_ home. _____

pp *mp* *ppp* *p* *n*

47 *mf*

To

mf *p* *mf* *mp*

mf *p* *mf*

mf

53

day it's not_ too dif-fi-cult to hold my head up_ straight

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

57

to-day_ my vi-sion is_ clear_ to-day the grip of_ pain

mp

mp *n*

mp *p*

mf *p*

mp *p*

62

poco rit. $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 96$

is loose_ e-nough_ to move this is as good as I_ can feel_ as

n *mp* *n*

airy tone

68

good as_ I'll e-ver_ feel._____

p

airy tone

ppp

p

3

74

mf

Sig nal Ridge Trail is laced with slip-per-y___ tree

f *poss.*

pp

f

pp

ord.

f

pp

ord.

f

mf

p

mf

p

3

3

3

3

3

3

78

— roots — send - ing me stum - bl - ing —

f *pp* *f*

pp *f* *pp*

3

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 78, 79, and 80. The vocal line (top staff) has lyrics 'roots' and 'send - ing me stum - bl - ing'. The piano accompaniment consists of four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *pp* (pianissimo). A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' in measure 80. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

81

— an - kles — twist - ing —

pp *f* *pp*

f *pp* *f* *pp*

II. I.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 81, 82, and 83. The vocal line (top staff) has lyrics 'an - kles' and 'twist - ing'. The piano accompaniment consists of four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo) and *f* (forte). First and second endings are marked with 'I.' and 'II.' in measures 82 and 83. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

84

My bo - dy knows I want to leave it

f *pp* *f* *pp*

f *pp* *f* *pp*

mp

mp

87

and bites the rock in des - pair

f *pp* *f* *p*

f *pp* *f*

f *pp* *f* *p*

f

90

Musical score for measures 90-92. The score consists of five staves. The top staff is empty. The second staff has dynamics *f*, *p*, and *f*. The third staff has dynamics *p*, *f*, and *p*. The fourth staff has dynamics *f* and *p*. The bottom staff has dynamics *p* and *mf*. The music features complex rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth notes and slurs.

93

Musical score for measures 93-95. The score consists of five staves. The top staff is empty. The second staff has dynamics *p*, *f*, and *p*. The third staff has dynamics *f* and *p*. The fourth staff has dynamics *f* and *p*. The bottom staff has dynamics *p*. The music features complex rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth notes and slurs.

96

mf

Tak - ing a break out of breath

f *pp* *f* *pp*

f *pp* *f* *p*

f *p* *f*

f *p* *f*

f *p* *mp*

99

we tell each oth - er "The

f *pp* *f* *p*

f *pp* *f*

p *f* *pp*

ppp *p*

102

f

view will be sub - lime when the clouds lift!"

f *pp* *f* *pp*

pp *f* *pp* *f*

f *pp* *f* *pp*

mf

105

mf

But the clouds nev - er lift

mf *pp* *f*

pp *mf* *pp*

mf *pp* *f* *p*

pp *p*

3

108

f

They swirl a - round the fire - tow - er in

111

wind threat - en - ing to tear us a - way re - fus -

114

- ing to al-low e-ven a glimpse of the green be-yond

p *ff* *p*

f *p* *f* *p*

pp *f* *p*

f *p* *f*

117

be - yond be - yond

ff *mf*

f *f* *pp*

3 3 3 3

122

Musical score for measures 122-126. The score is written for five staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs). The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The right hand of the piano part consists of a sequence of eighth-note triplets, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The bass line consists of a sequence of half notes, some of which are beamed together. The melody in the upper staves is mostly rests, with a few notes in the final measure.

127

Musical score for measures 127-131. The score is written for five staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs). The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The right hand of the piano part consists of a sequence of eighth-note triplets, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The bass line consists of a sequence of half notes, some of which are beamed together. The melody in the upper staves is mostly rests, with a few notes in the final measure.

132

p

Head-ing_ down_ knees al - so re -

mp *pp*

136

fuse to_ o - bey_ blood_ turned spik-y_ as_ the trail_

mp *pp*

pp *mp* *pp*

airy tone

p *n*

140

mp *mf*

Pap-er birch I

s.p. 3 → ord.

mp *p* *p* *pp* *mp* *n*

144

p

am a for-eign-er in your home now

s.p. 3 → ord.

mf *mf* *pp* *mp* *n*

148

mp will you kind - ly *pp* stead-y me?

pp *mp*

airy tone

152

mp *s.p.* *airy tone* *mp* *n* *mp* *n* *mp* *n*

n *mp* *n* *mp* *n* *mp* *n*

airy tone

mp *n* *mp* *n* *mp* *n*

n *mp* *pp* *mp* *n*