

Jaakko Mäntyjärvi

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Four Shakespeare Songs (1984)

1. Come Away, Death
2. Lullaby
3. Double, Double Toil and Trouble
4. Full Fathom Five

Ensemble :: Kokoonpano SSAATTBB
Duration :: Kesto 12 min
Publisher :: Kustantaja Sulasol S343
Text :: Teksti William Shakespeare EN
Premiere :: Kantaesitys Savolaisen Osakunnan Laulajat / Martti Nissinen
Helsinki, Finland ii.1985

Four Shakespeare Songs is a blend of Renaissance poetry and contemporary music. It is my first really serious choral work, having been preceded by *Kolme romanttista laulelmaa* (1982), a set of three rather unoriginal Romantic partsongs, and *Come Live With Me*. Like its predecessors, this work was written for the Savolaisen Osakunnan Laulajat student choir, which I sang with from 1982 to 1987 and returned to conduct from 1988 to 1993. It should be said, though, that the premiere of the work stretched the choir's resources to their limit at the time. The choral writing is varied and demanding, although the music never strays very far from traditional tonal harmony. The texts are songs from Shakespeare's plays, which I was studying in depth at the time of writing this music, in connection with my intermediate-level university studies in English.

COME AWAY, DEATH (*Twelfth Night*) is a lament of unhappy love, typical for Renaissance lyrics: the narrator begs his friends to bury him, as he has been killed by the coldness of the 'cruel maid' that he loves. The falling figure on the repeated word weep towards the end echoes madrigalesque word-painting.

LULLABY (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) is sung by fairies to their Queen; it is a soft and tranquil mood piece in siciliano rhythm.

DOUBLE, DOUBLE TOIL AND TROUBLE (*Macbeth*), on the other hand, is a sort of Medieval cookery programme. The three witches, or weird sisters, chant the ingredients of a magic potion that they are brewing. This is the potion that the witches use later in the same scene to prophesy to Macbeth that he will become King of Scotland. The text is rather wild, and the music uses a wide range of devices up to and including speech choir.

Four Shakespeare Songs on yhdistelmä renessanssilyriikkaa ja tämän vuosisadan musiikkia. Se on oikeastaan ensimmäinen vakavasti otettava kuoroteokseni; sitä edelsivät harjoitelmaksi vielä luettava *Kolme romanttista laulelmaa* (1982) sekä *Come Live With Me*. Edeltäjiensä lailla tämä teos on kirjoitettu Savolaisen Osakunnan Laulajille, jossa olin laulajana 1982-87 ja jota sittemmin johdin 1988-93. On tosin todettava, että teoksen kantaesitystä valmisteltaessa liikuttiiin kuoron silloisen suorituskyvyn ylärajoilla. Teoksen kuorosatsi on monipuolista ja vaativaa; sävelkieli pysyttelee kuitenkin lähellä tonaalista perinteistä harmoniaa. Laulujen tekstit ovat peräisin Shakespearen näytelmistä, joihin olin tutustumassa läheisesti noihin aikoihin englannin opintojeni II vaiheen (ent. cum laude) yhteydessä.

COME AWAY, DEATH (Tule, kuolema; näytelmästä *Loppiaisaatto*) on renessanssirunoudelle tyypillinen onnettoman rakkauden valitus: laulaja pyytää ystäviään hautamaan hänet, koska hänen rakkautensa kohde, 'julma neito', on surmannut hänet kylmyydellään. Loppupuolen laskeva kulku sanalla weep (itkeä) on madrigaalimaista sävelmaalailua.

LULLABY (Kehtolaulu; näytelmästä *Kesäyön unelma*) on keijujen kehtolaulu kuningattarelleen: hiljainen, siciliano-rytmissä pehmeästi keinuva tunnelmakappale.

DOUBLE, DOUBLE TOIL AND TROUBLE (Kaksin verroin työtä, vaivaa; näytelmästä *Macbeth*) taas on eräänlainen noitien ruoanlaitto-ohjelma: kolme noitaa esittelee tekeillä olevan taikakeitoksen aineksia. Tämä keitos on se, josta myöhemmin samassa kohtauksessa Macbethille ennustetaan, että hänestä tulee Skotlannin kuningas. Teksti on hurjanpuoleista; kappale käyttää laajoja keinovaroja aina puhekuoroon asti.

FULL FATHOM FIVE (*The Tempest*) is a comforting yet ghoulish description of how the body of a drowned man is transformed into treasures of the sea and how mermaids ring funeral bells for him.

Four Shakespeare Songs was premiered by the Savolaisen Osakunnan Laulajat student choir conducted by Martti Nissinen at the 80th anniversary banquet of the Savolainen osakunta (Savo student nation) of the University of Helsinki in February 1985.

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FULL FATHOM FIVE (Viisi sylvä syvällä; näytelmästä *Myrsky*) on yhtä aikaa lohdullinen ja karmiva kuvaus siitä, kuinka hukkuneen ruumis muuntuu rikkaiksi meren antimiksi, ja kuinka merenneitojen kellot soittavat hänen hautajaisiaan.

Four Shakespeare Songs -teoksen kantaesitti Savolaisen Osakunnan Laulajat Martti Nissisen johdolla Savolaisen Osakunnan 80-vuotisjuhlassa helmikuussa 1985.

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Four Shakespeare Songs

1. Come Away, Death

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Jaakko Mäntyjärvi (1984)

Andante moderato ♩ = 42 (♩ = 63)

S
 Come a way, come a way, Death, and in sad cy press let me be laid;

A
 Come a way, come a way, Death, and in sad cy press let me be laid;

T
 Come a way, come a way, Death, and in sad cy press let me be laid;

B
 Come, come, Death, and in sad cy press let me be laid;

5
mp Fly a way, fly a way, breath; I am slain by a fair cru el maid. My

mp Fly a way, fly a way, breath; I am slain by a fair cru el maid. My

mp Fly a way, fly a way, breath; I am slain by a fair cru el maid. My

mp Fly, fly, breath; I am slain by a fair cru el maid. My

Jaakko Mäntyjärvi: Four Shakespeare Songs (cont.)

2. Lullaby

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Jaakko Mäntyjärvi (1984)

Andante con moto $\text{♩} = 52$

S
A
T
B

mf
p
mf
p
mf
p
mf
p

A— You spot ted snakes with dou ble tongue,
A— You spot ted snakes with dou ble tongue,
A— La la la la la You spot ted snakes with dou ble tongue, with dou ble
A— La la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la

3. Double, Double Toil and Trouble

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mp
mp
mp
mp

S
A
T
B

Round a bout the caul dron go, In the poi son'd en trails
In the poi son'd en trails
Round a bout the caul dron go, In the poi son'd en trails
Dou ble, dou ble toil and trou ble, toil and trou ble, dou ble, dou ble toil and trou ble,

mp
mp
mp
mp

S
A
T
B

throw: Toad that un der cold — stone
throw:
throw: Toad that un der cold — stone
toil and trou ble, dou ble, dou ble toil and trou ble, toil and trou ble,

4. Full Fathom Five

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Jaakko Mäntyjärvi (1984)

Grave $\text{♩} = 54$

S
A
T
B

Full fa thom five thy fa ther lies: Of his bones are co ral made; Those are
Full fa thom five thy fa ther lies: Of his bones are co ral made; Those are
Full fa thom five thy fa ther lies: Of his bones are co ral made; Those are
Full fa thom five thy fa ther lie(s): Of — his bones are co ral made; Those are

cresc.
mp
cresc.
mp
cresc.
mp
cresc.
mp

S
A
T
B

pearls that were his eyes: — No thing of him No thing of him
pearls that were his eyes: — No thing of him
pearls that were his eyes: —
pearls that were his eyes: —