The Disappearance
d of All Holy Things from
this Once So Promising
World

for chamber orchestra

by
Kyle Gann
1998
The Disappearance of All Holy Things from this Once So Promising World (1998)
for chamber orchestra

The title is from a poem by the great San Francisco beat poet Kenneth Patchen, a poem called “One Who Hopes”:

Born like a veritable living prince
With small, pink, rectangular feet
And a disposition to hair, I stand
Under the blazing moon and wonder
At the disappearance of all holy things
From this once so promising world...

The Disappearance of All Holy Things from this Once So Promising World was written in September and October of 1998 for the Woodstock Chamber Orchestra, and is dedicated to its conductor, Luis Garcia-Renart. I extend a very special thanks to Joan Tower.

Kyle Gann

Premiere Performances by the Woodstock Chamber Orchestra:
Nov. 7, 1998, Church of the Holy Cross, Kingston, NY
Nov. 8, 1998, St. John’s Church, Hurley, NY
Nov. 11, 1998, Olin Auditorium, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

Cover drawing by Kenneth Patchen
Instrumentation:

2 flutes
2 oboes
2 clarinets in B-flat
bassoon
2 French horns in F
trumpet in B-flat
glockenspiel
violins I and II
violas
solo viola
cellos
contrabasses

Duration: 11 minutes

From measure 152 to the end, there is a prominent solo part for viola, whose audibility can be difficult to ensure. Any one of the following solutions is acceptable:

- Amplify the viola (the simplest, probably preferable solution, though some orchestras may prefer not to do this).
- Reduce the number of violins and other violas playing to the first one or two desks from mm. 152 to 177.
- Have half of the violas play the solo line.
- For an especially small orchestra, have the entire viola section play the solo line, with divisi at mm. 178-181.

**Score is notated in C.** All instruments sound at notated pitch except the glockenspiel (sounding two octaves higher) and contrabass (sounding one octave lower).
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Mysteriously

\( \text{pp} \rightarrow \text{p} \)

\( j = 66 \)

Flutes (2)
Oboes (2)
Clarinet! (2)
Bassoon
Horns (2)
Trumpet
Glockenspiel
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Contrabass

\( \text{delicately (soft mallets)} \)

\( \text{let ring} \)

\( \text{pp ethereal} \)

\( \text{ethereal} \)

\( \text{resonant and bell-like} \)
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\( q = 72 \)
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