

Fuaim is Seagh

for Mezzo-Soprano, B-flat Clarinet, and 'Cello

PREVIEW

Douglas Buchanan

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by Douglas Buchanan

Written for performance at the 2016 New Music on a Point Festival

I. Bà i ù o hò

II. Far am bi mi fhìn

PREVIEW

About the Work

Fuaim is Seagh (“Sound and Sense”) plays with the boundary between the semantic and the sensual content of text in Scots Gaelic lyrics and poetry. Each movement represents a different approach to this interplay, while also embodying a different form of music found in the Scottish folk tradition. The first movement, *Bà i ù o hò*, is a lullaby, with the refrain comprised of onomatopoeic syllables. The quarter-tone scales that permeate the work are roughly derived from the singers’ formants that resonate with these opening vowel sounds, creating a six-note scale made up of half-and-a-quarter steps, whole steps, and whole-and-a-quarter steps. These intervals create a pitch collection that contain a dominant and tonic relationship (C to F) while still filtering the musical gestures through a quarter-tone prism, refracting their meaning, akin to the act of translation or interpretation of non-lexical vocables (“nonsense” words). The second movement, *Far am bi mi fhìn*, is written in the style of a reel, a fast-moving dance, specifically a *puirt-à-beul*, literally, “mouth music.” Whereas the first movement’s focus was on the vowel sounds, this second movement highlights consonants—the lyrics of a *puirt-à-beul* were frequently nonsensical, banal, or perhaps even lewd, with the emphasis placed on creating a rhythmic, drum-, pipe-, or fiddle-like sound that could essentially serve in place of an instrument for dancing or other entertainment. This final movement weaves the two scale types together to a greater degree than before, ultimately utilizing their various transpositions together in a final push towards the closing refrain.

Notes to the Performers

The work uses scales built on quarter-tones, equally dividing the octave into twenty-four pitches; thus, D-three-quarter-sharp is equal to E-one-quarter-flat. The notation for these accidentals is as follows:

- ♯_{1/4} - One quarter-tone flat
- ♯_{3/4} - Three quarter-tones flat (included for completeness; no three-quarter-flat accidentals are utilized)
- ♯_{1/4} - One quarter-tone sharp
- ♯_{3/4} - Three quarter-tones sharp

A useful guide for quarter-tone fingering on the clarinet can be found here:

<http://jasonalder.com/fingeringchart/Clarinet_quarter-tone_fingering-chart--Jason_Alder.pdf>

Texts, Phonetic Pronunciation, and Translations

I. Bà i ù o hò

Bà i ù o hò	ba: i u ɔ ho	[Lulling sounds,
Bà i ò ho bà	ba: i o hɔ ba:	as to a baby]
Gheibh thu bainne bhuam	jev u banʲə vuəm	I'll give to you milk,
Chan ann fuar ach blàth	xan ⁽ⁱ⁾ aũn fuər ax bla:	Not cold, but warm.
Cha bhi mise bhuat	xa vi miʃə vuət	I won't be away from you,
Mach air uair no dhà	max ɛrʲ uərʲ nɔ ɣa:	Apart from me or twice

II. Far am bi mi fhìn

Far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhòchas	far əm bi mi hi:n is aũn ə vis mə ɔ:xəs
Far am bi mi fhìn bidh mo dhòchas ann	far əm bi mi hi:n bi: mə dɔ:xəs aũn

[Refrain] Where I will be is where my hope lies
Where I will be my hope lies.

Théid mi fhìn is Sìne null gu taigh a' phìobair	hed mi hi:n is ʃi:nə nũ:l gə tɔj ə pi:bərʲ(ə)
'S nì sinn brod an ruidhle leinn fhìn a' fàilich	sni: ʃi:nʲ brɔd ən ri:lə lɛ:nə hi:n ɛrʲ ən La:rʲ

Sheena and I will go to the piper's house
and we will dance a choice reel by ourselves on the floor. [Refrain]

'S mur toir am pìobair port dhuinn airson ruidhle	smər hɔrʲ əm pi:bərʲ(ə) pɔrʃd du:nʲ ər'sɔn ri:lə
'S ann a bheir sinn sgrìob chun an fhìdhlear bhàn	san ə veʲ ʃi:nʲ sgrʲi:b xun ən fi:lɛr va:n

And if the piper doesn't play us a tune for the reel
we'll head off to see the fair fiddler. [Refrain]

Siubhal air na cladaichean 's a'	ʃu.əl ɛrʲ na kladɛxɛn sə
coiseachd air a' ghainmhich	kɔʃɛxg ɛrʲ ə genevix
Far am bi mi fhìn bidh mo dhòchas ann	far əm bi mi hi:n bi: mə dɔ:xəs aũn

Traveling the shores and walking on the sand
where I will be my hope lies. [Refrain]

Texts and translations are in the public domain. Pronunciations were edited and compiled by the composer, with assistance from the online Scottish dictionary, <<http://www.faclair.com>>.

Fuaim is Seagh

Transposed Score

Douglas Buchanan (b. 1984)

I. Bà i ù o hò

Gently; lulling (♩ = c 112)

mp *simplice*

Mezzo-Soprano

Bà i ù o hò,

B♭ Clarinet

pp (*>*) *pp* (*>*) *simile*

Cello

pp (*>*) *pp* (*>*) *simile*

Mezzo

Bà i ù o hò, Bà i ù o hò,

B♭ Cl.

pp (*>*) *pp* (*>*) *simile*

Vc.

pp (*>*) *pp* (*>*) *simile*

Mezzo

Bà i ò hò bà

B♭ Cl.

pp (*>*) *pp* (*>*) *simile*

Vc.

pp (*>*) *pp* (*>*) *simile*

I. Bà i ù o hò

Mezzo *mp*
13 Gheibh thu bain - ne bhu - am, _____ gheibh thu bain - ne bhu - am, _____

B \flat Cl. 13

Vc. 13

Mezzo *poco* *poco*
17 gheibh thu bain - ne bhu - am, bhu am, chan ann fu - ar _____ ach blàth. _____

B \flat Cl. 17

Vc. 17

Mezzo *mp* *simplice*
21 Bà i ù _____ o _____ hò, Bà i ù _____ o _____ hò,

B \flat Cl. 21

Vc. 21

I. Bà i ù o hò

25

Mezzo

Bà i ù o hò, Bà i ò ho bà

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

30

Mezzo

mp Cha bhi mi - se bhu-at, *p* cha bhi mi-se bhu-at,

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

35

Mezzo

f cha bhi mi - se bhu-at, *poco* bhu-at, mach air u - air no dhà.

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

I. Bà i ù o hò

Mezzo *p possibile*
39 Bà i ù o hò, Bà i ù o

B♭ Cl. *mp* *simplice*

Vc. *mp* *simplice*

Mezzo
43 hò Bà i ù o hò,

B♭ Cl.
43

Vc.
43

Mezzo
46 Bà i ò ho bà

B♭ Cl.
46

Vc.
46

II. Far am bi mi fhìn

Rollicking (♩ = c 90)

♩ = ♩ sempre

Mezzo-Soprano

B♭ Clarinet

Cello

Mezzo-Soprano

B♭ Clarinet

Cello

p *cresc.* *mp* *cresc.*

p *cresc.* *cresc.*

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

mf *cresc.* *f* *cresc.*

mf *cresc.* *f* *cresc.*

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

mf

Far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas, far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas,

piu f *p* *pizz.* *p*

piu f *p*

II. Far am bi mi fhìn

Mezzo *cresc.*
far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-chas, far am bi mi fhìn, bi mi bidh mo dhò-cas

B♭ Cl.

Vc. *arco*

Mezzo *f* *mf* *f*
ann. Théid mi fhìn is Si-ne null gu taigh a phìo-bair,

B♭ Cl. *mf* *cresc.* *f* *non legato*

Vc. *mf* *cresc.* *f*

Mezzo *mf* *mf* possibile
théid mi fhìn is Si-ne null gu taigh a phìo-bair, théid mi fhìn is Si-ne

B♭ Cl. *f* *non legato* *mf* *f* *3* *3*

Vc. *f* *mf* *pizz.* *f*

17 Mezzo
 null gu taigh a phìo bair, 'snì sinn brod an ruidh - le leinn fhìn air an lar. — (9)

17 B♭ Cl.
mp *arco* *cresc.*

17 Vc.
mp *cresc.*

19 Mezzo
mf
 Far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas, far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas,

19 B♭ Cl.
piu f *p*

19 Vc.
piu f *pizz.*

21 Mezzo
 far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas, far am bi mi fhìn, bi mi bidh mo dhò-cas ann.

21 B♭ Cl.
mf

21 Vc.
mf *arco* *cresc.*

II. Far am bi mi fhìn

Mezzo

24 *mf* *f* *mf*

'Smur toir am pio-bair port dhuinn air-son ruidh-le, 'smur toir am — pio-bair

B♭ Cl.

24 *mp* *p*

Vc.

24 *f* *mf*

Mezzo

28 *f* *mf*

port dhuinn air-son ruidh-le, 'smur toir am pio-bair port dhuinn air-son ruidh-le,

B♭ Cl.

28 *f* *piu f* *mf*

Vc.

28 *piu f* *mf*

Mezzo

33 *piu f* *mf*

'sann a bheir sinn sgrìob chun an — fhìdh-lear bhàn. Far am bi mi fhìn is

B♭ Cl.

33 *f* *p*

Vc.

33 *f*

36

Mezzo *f* *p subito*
ann a bhios ma dhò - chas Siu - bhal air na

B♭ Cl. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

40

Mezzo
cla - dai - chen 'sa chor - seachd air a -

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

44

Mezzo
ghai - n - mich, far am bi mi fhìn, bi mi bidh mo dho - chas

B♭ Cl. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

II. Far am bi mi fhìn

Mezzo *f*

48 *ann.* Far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas, far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas,

B♭ Cl. *f*

Vc. *piu f* *mf*

Mezzo far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas, far am bi mi fhìn, bi mi bidh mo dhò-cas *ann.*

51

B♭ Cl. *f*

Vc. *f* *arco*

Mezzo *piu f*

54 Far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas, far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas,

B♭ Cl. *fp* *fp*

Vc. *f*

Mezzo far am bi mi fhìn is ann a bhios mo dhò-cas Far am bi mi fhìn, bi mi bidh mo dhò-cas *ann!*

56 *cresc. al fine* *ff*

B♭ Cl. *fp* *cresc. al fine* *ff*

Vc. *cresc. al fine* *ff*