

OLIVER
KNUSSEN

Prayer Bell Sketch

FOR SOLO PIANO

Op.29

(1997)

祈りの鐘
素描

FABER *ff* MUSIC

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First published in 2000 by Faber Music Ltd
Bloomsbury House 74–77 Great Russell Street London WC1B 3DA
Music processed by Christopher Hinkins
Calligraphy especially drawn by Joji Yuasa
Cover design by S & M Tucker
Printed in England by Caligraving Ltd
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ISBN10: 0-571-51952-0
EAN13: 978-0-571-51952-1

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in loving memory of Toru Takemitsu

PROGRAMME NOTE

IT IS WELL KNOWN that Toru Takemitsu always conceived the title of a piece before composing it. In May 1988, between rehearsals for the first performance of *Tree Line* in London, Takemitsu and I took a long walk in Regent's Park. One of the things we talked about was Peter Serkin's recital programme made up entirely of new pieces, planned for the following year, to which we had both been invited to contribute.

'I already have title', he said. 'Prayer Bell.'

I expressed appreciation of this wonderfully evocative starting point, and afterwards tried to imagine what it might draw from him. But Takemitsu's piece for Peter Serkin turned out in the event to be *Les Yeux Clos II*.

Some years later, talking about titles again, I asked him what had happened to *Prayer Bell*.

'*Prayer Bell* may be too difficult', was the response this time.

Following his death in 1996, I spent much time trying to imagine a *Prayer Bell* in memory of Toru, and came to the conclusion that he was probably right – so what eventually emerged during three days in Tokyo in September 1997 is a *Prayer Bell Sketch*, recollections and rearrangements of a few simple bell sounds which, to me, resonate with memories of a dear friend and wonderful composer.

Prayer Bell Sketch was commissioned by Ms. Masako Okamura and Mr. Motoyuki Nakagawa in memory of Toru Takemitsu, and was first performed by Peter Serkin, for whom it was written, at the new Takemitsu Memorial Concert Hall in Tokyo Opera City on 22 September 1997.

Oliver Knussen

Duration: approximately 5½ minutes

Prayer Bell Sketch

OLIVER KNUSSSEN
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A **Spaciously**
♩ = c.48
rubato

poco f *mf* *p* *pp* *f* *sf* *mf*

Ped. sempre!

4 *pp* *p* *f* *mf* *poco f* *mp cant.* *pp sempre*

(Ped. sempre)

7 *ppp* *p sempre* *mf* *poco f* *mf*

(Ped. sempre) *ppp* 8

* slight emphasis on lower notes (until b.13)

10 *mp* *p* *pp* *ppp* **B** *pochiss. calando*

(Ped. sempre) *ppp* 8

B (a tempo)

13 *ppp poss.* *pp* *p > pp* *(ppp)*

(Ped.)

15 *mp* *poco f* *p* *rubato* *f* *mp* *mf* *mf*

poco f *mf* *p* *poco f*

(Ped. →) *pp* **B**