

for Kiku Day and the Nonsuch Singers

Wild Ways

1. Crazy Cloud

Words by Ikkyū Sōyun, translated by John Stevens

Roxanna Panufnik
(* 1968)

Crazily... ♩ = 120 **G.P.**

Soprano 1

Alto 1

Tenor 1
*) *ff*
“Kyoh___ Un!”

Bass 1
*) *ff*
“Kyoh___ Un!”

Shakuhachi
in D
**) *ff*

Soprano 2

Alto 2

Tenor 2
*) *ff*
“Kyoh___ Un!”

Bass 2
*) *ff*
“Kyoh___ Un!”

*) Japanese for Crazy Cloud – should be exclaimed, Noh Theatre style!

**) where there are no noteheads, play any notes around this pitch, creating a “Crazy Cloud” of sound

4

S1 *f* A

A1 *f* A

T1 *f* A

B1 *f* A

Shak. *tr* *flutter* 6 6

S2 *f* A

A2 *f* A

T2 *f* A

B2 *f* A

Detailed description: This musical score is for a 12-part ensemble. It consists of two systems of four staves each. The first system includes parts for Soprano 1 (S1), Alto 1 (A1), Tenor 1 (T1), and Bass 1 (B1). The second system includes parts for Soprano 2 (S2), Alto 2 (A2), Tenor 2 (T2), and Bass 2 (B2). Additionally, there is a solo part for a Shakuhachi (Shak.). The vocal parts (S1, A1, T1, B1, S2, A2, T2, B2) are written in treble and bass clefs and feature a final measure with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a whole note 'A' chord. The Shakuhachi part is written in treble clef and includes various techniques: trills (*tr*), flutter, and sixteenth-note runs (marked with '6'). The score is marked with a '4' at the beginning of the first system, likely indicating a four-measure phrase.

In 2005, ji-nashi shakuhachi player Kiku Day approached me to write a piece for her, as part of her mission to increase the use of the shakuhachi (Japanese bamboo flute) in Western classical music. When she played to me, its warmth and huskiness seemed so spookily like a human voice that I decided an *a cappella* double choir setting of words would best complement it. We found a choir – the Nonsuch Singers – brave enough to enter into this project and Kiku found me the wild and wonderful poems of Ikkyū Sōyun, a 15th Century Zen master whose timeless words cover the entire gamut of human emotion and are beautifully translated by John Stevens. The poems are often very short, so each movement is a compilation of two or three of them.

1. Crazy Cloud was a name that Ikkyū gave himself when in 1428 he finished his Zen training and went his own “wild way”. The movement starts with a boisterous “Noh Theatre”-style acclamation of his nickname in Japanese and the music is “Blown about madly” by shakuhachi and voices alike.

For **2. Love Song**, I have used a beautiful and poignant Japanese lullaby called “Edo Komoriuta” (meaning “Lullaby from Edo”, the old name for Tokyo) as a backdrop to two of Ikkyū’s highly romantic and sensual poems. The lullaby is sung in Japanese and the words depict the loss of a little boy’s beloved nursemaid who has gone back to her home. This chimes with how Ikkyū feels at the loss of his true love to another man.

3. Autumn Night brings together three of the many poems that Ikkyū wrote which mention this season. During my research into Japanese traditional music I was introduced to mnemonics – a form of aural transmission of music through the natural pitch patterns of various vowel and consonant sounds. These “words” don’t actually mean anything but if you try saying the percussion line, *Tsu ta pon tsu-ta tsu po-po-pon etc.*, you will see how the sounds automatically come out as a rough pitch and rhythmic pattern. These are mnemonics taken from a Kabuki dance called “Goro Tokimune”. The process is reversed as in the middle verse when the shakuhachi provides the melody whilst the choir recites the words.

There are many people without whom this piece would not exist. I would like to thank Keith Howard for pointing Kiku into my direction, Kiku for bringing me into the wonderful and extraordinary world of the shakuhachi and to David Hughes for his patient teaching of the elements of Japanese traditional music. Thanks also go to Graham Caldbeck and the Nonsuch Singers who have worked incredibly hard to get this project off the ground. We owe a huge debt of gratitude also to both the Sasakawa and PRS Foundations for their financial support of the commission.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

The shakuhachi is a relatively quiet instrument so I would recommend positioning the choir at the very back of the performance space and the shakuhachi at the front, as close as possible to the audience. S/he can be at the side and slightly turned towards the choir and the conductor. Even more preferable would be some moderate amplification – e.g. Shure SM57 mic, Joe Meek VCQ pre-amp, and a M-Audio Studiofile BX5 speaker to output the sound into the audience.

Soloists should sing with choir when not singing their solos.

Pronunciation: *Kyoh Un* - “Kyoh oon”

Nennen korori yo okorori yo,

Nen-nen Ko-ro-ree yo o-ko-ro-ree yo (the *o* short as in “cot”)

Bōya wa yoi ko da nenne shi na.

Bo-yuh wuh o-ee ko duh nen-ne shee nuh. (the *a* as in French “chat”)