



# ***Conversation with Magic Stones***

*(after the sculpture by Barbara Hepworth)*

*For solo contrabass instrument and small ensemble*

## ***Trumpet in Bb***

*Nigel Morgan*

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## ***Conversations with Magic Stones***

*(after the sculpture by  
Barbara Hepworth)*

*For solo contrabass instrument  
and small ensemble*

*Nigel Morgan*

This work was commissioned by Yorkshire Sculpture Park for the exhibitions celebrating the centenary of Dame Barbara Hepworth in 2003. As a piece for solo double bass it forms part of a 25 minute concert work titled *Music for Sculptures*. It was first performed in this solo version by David Langstroth of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales at Yorkshire Sculpture Park on June 14 2003.

The music has been written in such a way that it can be played effectively by any contrabass instrument with or without a small ensemble. The compass and *tessitura* of the solo part makes this possible. The work is presented here for double bass, but versions for electric bass guitar, tuba, and contra-bassoon are available.

The ensemble version is scored for:

Solo Contrabass Instrument

Flute  
Oboe  
Clarinet in Bb  
Trumpet in Bb  
Bass Trombone

All markings of phrasing, dynamics, tempo and articulations should be considered as initial guides, no more.

*Conversation with Magic Stones* is one of a number of works by Nigel Morgan that use source material from Nicholas Slonimsky's *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns* (1947), a collection of several thousand examples much used by jazz musicians and composers. John Coltrane is said to have learnt them all! John Adams recently celebrated their use in his orchestral work *Slonimsky's Earbox*. *Conversation* employs patterns 1 to 5: the tritone progression (an equal division of the octave into two parts) with an interpolation of one note.

More information about *Music for Sculptures* can be seen at [www.nigel-morgan.co.uk](http://www.nigel-morgan.co.uk)

*The work is dedicated to David and Tasha  
Langstroth*

## *Conversation with Magic Stones*

A few black and green yews  
are where these forms choose,  
for privacy or camouflage,  
to stage their large self-absorption.

Among them  
no bend.  
No stoop.  
I turn.  
The bland  
smile of  
innuendo  
glances  
off my back.  
Verdigris  
mouths  
grimace.

But oblique is the glance of the magic stones.  
No horizontals but a line of obedient water  
where yew needles ride, idle in the shallow  
bronze crater in a warm bronze plain.  
One stone bends an avian eye  
but the other, with lowered gaze,  
exposes its receptivity,  
its vulnerable fontanelle.

A figure  
confronts  
a stone.  
Severe  
Verdigris  
mouth.  
Smooth  
face, hard.

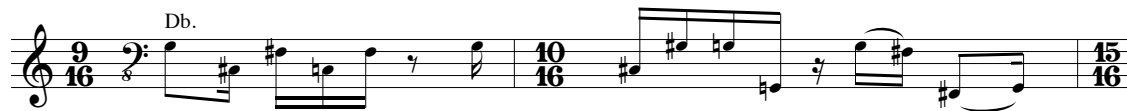
The stone deflects all words,  
with every plane, line and angle  
points to escape routes.  
I stand where the stones  
overlap in my sight  
Each seems a child  
with an incalculable centre.

There is no end to the secrets  
they slip each other.

# Conversation with Magic Stones

Trumpet  
in Bb

with purpose ♩ = 88



33 **C** *with energy*  $\text{♩} = 90$   
Db.

*f* *mp* *mf* *f*

39

*mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *f*

43 Db.

*mp* *mf* *f*

48

*mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

53 **D**

*p* *mf* *mp* *mp* *mf* *f*

58 *con sord.*

*mf* *mp* *mf*

63 **E** *cool but with freedom*  $\text{♩} = 58$   
Db.

*mf* *f*

67

*mp* *mf* *f* *mf*

71

*mp* *mf* *p* *mp* *accelerando e cresc.*

76

*f* *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* *ff*

**F** *a tempo*  
Db.

80

*f* *mf* *fp* *mf* *senza sord.*  
G.P.

84

*mf* *mp* *p* *mf* *with determination* *♩ = 56* *Db. (pizz.)* *brighter (less determined)*

88

*mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp* *f* *Cl. in Bb*

92

*f* *mp* *mp* *mf* *more determined* *restrained* *poco allargando*