



The World Below the Brine

from Deep Sea Songs (2012)

for large chorus (SATB)

Words by Walt Whitman

Music by Nigel Morgan

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About the music

Walt Whitman (1819 – 1892) was a poet whose words about the natural world have continued to enjoy new and novel settings by composers today. No doubt influenced by the descriptive writing of his almost exact contemporary Herman Melville, Whitman's descriptions of the sea contain a richness and wonder. *The World Below the Brine* is no exception containing extravagant lists of fish, mammal and plant life below the waves.

The World Below the Brine is the first of three *Deep Sea Songs* that take their cue from the composer's immersion in the world of the deep oceans during the composition of *Migrations* for orchestra, *Sounding the Deep* for bass voice and orchestra, and *Shoals* for chamber ensembles and electronics. The setting, for a large chorus of at least eighty voices, has been composed for the National Youth Choir of Great Britain and their new music director Ben Parry.

In this setting there is a simplicity of texture combined with a looser approach to word setting than is usually found in Nigel Morgan's choral works, most of which are for smaller forces.

Words by Walt Whitman feature prominently in Nigel Morgan's *Schizophonia*, a work for three ensembles, a co-commission between BBC Wales and the Ilios Festival Norway. Two pieces for large chorus and keyboard under the title *Vocalism* are available as standalone works in the composer's catalogue.

The World Below the Brine

Walt Whitman

The world below the brine,
Forests at the bottom of the sea, the branches and leaves,
Sea-lettuce, vast lichens, strange flowers and seeds, the thick
tangle openings, and pink turf,
Different colors, pale gray and green, purple, white, and gold, the
play of light through the water,
Dumb swimmers there among the rocks, coral, gluten, grass, rushes,
and the aliment of the swimmers,
Sluggish existences grazing there suspended, or slowly crawling
close to the bottom,
The sperm-whale at the surface blowing air and spray, or disporting
with his flukes,
The leaden-eyed shark, the walrus, the turtle, the hairy
sea-leopard, and the sting-ray,
Passions there, wars, pursuits, tribes, sight in those ocean-depths,
breathing that thick-breathing air, as so many do,
The change thence to the sight here, and to the subtle air breathed
by beings like us who walk this sphere,
The change onward from ours to that of beings who walk other spheres.

I. The World Below the Brine

sereno ♩ = 70

mf *p* *mf*

Soprano
the bran - ches and leaves vast li - chens

Alto
mf Fo - rests at the bo-ttom of the sea Sea le - ttuce vast li - - chens

Tenor
mf the bran - ches and leaves vast li - chens

Bass
mf Fo - rests at the bo-ttom of the sea Sea le-ttuce vast li - chens

6 *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *poco allargando* ♩ = 65 *mf* *f*

S.
Strange flo-wers and seeds the thick thick tan- gle thick tan- gle

A.
Strange flo-wers and seeds the thick thick tan- gle thick tan- gle

T.
Strange flo-wers and seeds the thick thick tan- gle thick tan- gle

B.
Strange flo-wers and seeds the thick thick tan- gle thick tan- gle

12 *mf* $\text{mf} > p$ *risonare e serio* $\text{♩} = 70$ *f*

S. *mf* $\text{mf} > p$ *f*
 o - pe - nings and pink turf the world the world be - low the world be - low the brine

A. *mf* $\text{mf} > p$ *f*
 o - - pe - nings and pink turf the world the world be - low the world be - low the brine

T. *mf* $\text{mf} > p$ *f*
 o - pe - nings and pink turf the world the world be - low the world be - low the brine

B. *mf* $\text{mf} > p$ *f*
 o - - pe - nings and pink turf the world the world be - low the world be - low the brine

18 *sereno* *mp* *f* *mf* *f* *mp*

S. *mp* *f* *mf* *f* *mp*
 grey and green pur - ple white gold the play of light through the wa - ter

A. *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mp*
 pale grey pale grey and green pur - ple white gold the play of light through the wa - ter

T. *mf* *mf* *f* *mp*
 pale grey pale grey and green pur - ple white and gold the play of light through the

B. *mf* *f* *mp*
 pur - ple white and gold the play of light through the

23 *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *deliberamente*

S. *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*
di - ffe - rent *di - ffe - rent co - lours* *di - ffe - rent* *di - ff^rrent co - lours*

A. *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*
di - ffe - rent *di - ffe - rent co - lours* *di - ffe - rent* *di - ff^rrent co - lours*

T. *f* *p* *mf* *p* *f*
wa - ter *di - ffe - rent* *di - ffe - rent co - lours* *di - ffe - rent* *di - ff^rrent co - lours*

B. *f* *p* *mf* *p* *f*
wa - ter *di - - ff^rrent* *di - ff^rrent co - lours* *di - - ff^rrent* *di - ff^rrent co - lours*

27 *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

S. *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*
There a - mong the rocks *glu - ten ru - shes* *Dumb swi - mmers*

A. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*
there *co - ral* *the a - li - ment of the* *swi - mmers dumb swi - mmers*

T. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*
there *co - ral* *and the a - li - ment of the* *swi - mmers gra - -*

B. *mf* *mp* *mp* *mf*
There a - mong the rocks *grass* *and the a - li - ment of the* *swi - mmers gra - -*

32 $\text{♩} = 65$

S. *mp sub.* *mf*
 dumb swi-mmers slu-ggish e-xi-sten-ces su-spen-ded there su-spen-ded slow-ly

A. *mp sub.* *mf*
 slu-ggish e-xi-sten-ces su-spen-ded there su-spen-ded slow-ly

T. *poco a poco cresc.* *mf* *f* *mp sub.* *mf*
 -zing gra-zing gra- - zing there su-spen-ded there su-spen-ded slow-ly craw-ling

B. *poco a poco cresc.* *mf* *f* *mp sub.* *mf*
 -zing gra-zing gra- - zing there su-spen-ded there su-spen-ded or slow-ly

37 *calando* $\text{♩} = 60$ *animato* $\text{♩} = 60$

S. *p* *mf* *f*
 craw-ling close to the bot-tom the sperm whale the sperm whale

A. *p* *mf* *f*
 craw-ling close to the bot-tom at the sur-face blow-ing air and spray dis-por-ting his flukes

T. *p* *mf* *f*
 close to the bo-ttom at the sur-face blow-ing air and spray dis-por-ting his flukes

B. *p* *mf* *f*
 craw-ling close to the bot-tom the sperm whale the sperm whale

43

S. *mp*
 at the sur - - face blow - - ing blow - ing air and spray

A. *mf*
 the lea-den eyed shark, the wal - - rus, the hai - ry sea leo-pard the sting ray *mf*
 at the sur-face

T. *mf*
 the lea - den eyed shark, the tur - tle, the hai - ry sea leo-pard, the sting ray *mf*
 at the sur-face

B. *mp*
 blow - ing blow - ing blow - ing air and spray

49

S. *mf* *f* *ff*
 the sperm whale the sperm whale Pa - ssions, pa - ssions, wars,

A. *mf* *f* *ff*
 blow-ing air and spray dis - por - ting his flukes pa - ssions, pa - ssions, wars,

T. *mf* *f* *ff*
 blow - ing air and spray dis - por - ting his flukes pa - ssions, pa - ssions, wars,

B. *mf* *f* *ff*
 the sperm whale the sperm whale pa - - - ssions, pa - - ssions, wars,

55 *sotto voce subito* *p* $\text{♩} = 110$

S. *pur - suits,* *tribes,* *sight in those* *o - cean depths* *brea - thing* *that thick brea - thing air*

A. *pur - suits,* *tribes,* *sight in those* *o - cean depths* *brea - thing* *that thick brea - thing air,*

T. *pur - suits,* *tribes,* *sight in those* *o - cean depths* *brea - thing* *that thick brea - thing air*

B. *pur - suits,* *tribes,* *sight* *in those* *o - cean depths* *brea - thing* *that thick brea - thing air*

62 *semplice* $\text{♩} = 100$

S. *normale mf*

A. *normale mf* *4:3*

T. *normale mf*

B. *normale mf*

S. *The change thence* *to the sight* *here*

A. *as so ma - ny* *do,* *The change thence* *to the sight* *here*

T. *and to the sub - tle* *air brea - - thod by be - ings*

B. *and to the sub - tle* *air brea - - thod by be - ings*

70

mf

S. *The change on-ward to that of be-ings who walk o - ther*

mf

A. *The change on-ward from ours to that of be-ings who walk o - ther*

mf

T. *like us who walk this sphere The change on-ward from ours to that of be-ings who walk o -*

mf

B. *like us who walk this sphere The change on-ward to that of be-ings who walk o -*

78

S. *spheres.*

A. *spheres.*

T. *- ther spheres.*

B. *- ther spheres.*