

Contemporary Composers Series

# *Sweet Briar Elegies*

*Soprano Saxophone and Piano*

*... I saw it was filled with graves.  
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:  
And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
And binding with briars my joys and desires.  
William Blake, Songs of Experience (1794)*

## *Joelle Wallach*

*To the Fore Publishers  
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## *Sweet Briar Elegies*

Written in Sweet Briar, Virginia during the summer of 1992 in the aftermath of the death of the composer's husband, *Sweet Briar Elegies* is set for soprano saxophone and cello ensemble or soprano saxophone and piano. The two movements are not independent "elegies" but comprise a single elegiac whole. The first movement is a recitative of passionate wistfulness; the second movement, an aria of poignant lyricism and longing with an ominous and disturbing middle section.

The piece bears an epigram from William Blake's *Songs of Experience*:

... I saw it was filled with graves.  
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:  
And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

William Blake, *Songs of Experience* (1794)

Since 1980 when her choral work, *On the Beach at Night Alone*, won first prize in the Inter-American Music Awards, Wallach has regularly placed first in international composition competitions. Her *String Quartet 1995* was the American Composers Alliance nominee for the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in Music. The New York Philharmonic Ensembles premiered her octet, *From the Forest of Chimneys*, written to celebrate their 10th anniversary; and the New York Choral Society commissioned her secular oratorio, *Toward a Time of Renewal*, for 200 voices and orchestra to commemorate their 1994 35th Anniversary Season in Carnegie Hall. *To the Fore Publishers* is pleased to publish her works for saxophone, which in addition to *Sweet Briar Elegies*, include *Eulogy*, for soprano saxophone and string quartet, and the *Saxophone Quartet*.

Ms. Wallach lives in New York City, where she was born. She was raised there and in Morocco. Her early training in piano, voice, theory, bassoon and violin included study at the Juilliard Preparatory Division, and she earned bachelors and masters degrees at Sarah Lawrence College and Columbia University respectively. In 1984 the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with John Corigliano, granted her its first doctorate in composition.

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# Sweet Briar Elegies

## I

Joelle Wallach

Misterioso, Cantabile e poco quasi Recitativo

Soprano  
Saxophone  
in B $\flat$

Tempo:  $\text{♩} = 66$

Measures 1-2: Soprano Saxophone part with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics: *mp* misterioso e cantabile. Piano accompaniment with a piano (*p*) chord and a melodic line.

Measures 3-4: Soprano Saxophone part with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics: *poco più f* e poco più agitato. Piano accompaniment with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) chord and a melodic line.

Measures 3-4: Soprano Saxophone part with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics: *mp* dolce ma maestoso. Piano accompaniment with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) chord and a melodic line.

Measures 5-6: Soprano Saxophone part with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics: *mp*. Piano accompaniment with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) chord and a melodic line.

Measures 5-6: Soprano Saxophone part with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics: *sfz*. Piano accompaniment with a sforzando (*sfz*) chord and a melodic line.

9

*f* *poco meno f*

*sfs* *poco meno f*

12

*poco* *sfs*

*poco* *sfs*

15

*mf* *claro* *poco* *mf*

*mp* *claro* *poco*

*più agitato ma cantabile*

18

*più dolce* *più maestoso*

*mp* *cantabile*

*più dolce*

poco rallentando (a tempo)

21

a tempo

mp dolce

a tempo

poco rallentando (a tempo)

p

mp lontano

p

mp

24

mp

mp lontano

poco

p

mp lontano

27

mp

mf

mp

f

mf

30

*p i ù a g i t a t o*

molto ff

*p i ù a g i t a t o*

molto ff

bluesey

♩ = 60

p cantabile

pp

33

*ben p cantabile*

*p cantabile*

*(cantabile)*

36

*mp*

39

*mf*

42

*ben p e ben dolce*

45

*poco f*

*p cantabile*

*poch. f*

48

*mf*

*mf*

*mp*

51

*mf*

*mp*

54

(whiter tone)

*p*

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

57

mp mf

5 3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 57 and 58. The right-hand part (RH) features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mp* at the start and *mf* later. It includes a triplet of eighth notes and a five-measure rest. The left-hand part (LH) provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines, marked with *mf*.

59

poco f espr.

cantabile

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 59, 60, and 61. Measure 59 is mostly a whole rest in the RH. Measures 60 and 61 show more activity in both hands. The RH has a triplet of eighth notes and is marked *cantabile*. The LH is marked *poco f espr.*

62

mf

mf espr.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 62, 63, and 64. The RH has a melodic line with a *mf* dynamic. The LH is marked *mf espr.* and features a five-measure rest in measure 63.

65

p

p espr. lontano

mp cantabile

Detailed description: This system contains measures 65, 66, and 67. The RH has a melodic line with a *p* dynamic. The LH is marked *p espr. lontano*. The system concludes with a *mp cantabile* marking in the LH.



68

*mf piangere*

*f espressivo*

*mp*

71

*mf*

*mf espressivo*

74

*mf espressivo*

*mp*

*pp*

*poco ritenuto*

78

*p con dignita*

*molto*

*pp*

*p cantabile*

*ppp*

*ppp*

# II

## Cantabile rapsodico

♩ = 66-69

The first system of the score is in 4/4 time. The right hand (RH) begins with a melodic line featuring a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) followed by a half note (Fb). The left hand (LH) provides a bass line with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) and a half note (Fb). The tempo is marked *mp cantabile*. The system concludes with a *poco f* dynamic marking and a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb).

The second system continues the piece. The RH features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) and a half note (Fb). The LH has a bass line with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) and a half note (Fb). The tempo is marked *mp*. The system concludes with a *poco f* dynamic marking and a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb).

The third system continues the piece. The RH features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) and a half note (Fb). The LH has a bass line with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) and a half note (Fb). The tempo is marked *mp*. The system concludes with a *mfp* dynamic marking and a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb).

The fourth system continues the piece. The RH features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) and a half note (Fb). The LH has a bass line with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) and a half note (Fb). The tempo is marked *Luminoso*. The system concludes with a *pp* dynamic marking and a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb).

12

*poco f* *espres.*

*mp* *espres.*

Measures 12 and 13 of a musical score. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats. It features a melodic line with a slur over measures 12-13 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 13. The bottom staff is in bass clef, providing harmonic support with triplets of eighth notes in measures 12 and 13. Dynamics include *poco f* *espres.* in the top staff and *mp* *espres.* in the bottom staff.

14

*mp* *espres.*

*poco p*

Measures 14 and 15. The top staff continues the melodic line with a slur and a triplet in measure 15. The bottom staff features a triplet of eighth notes in measure 14 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 15. Dynamics include *mp* *espres.* in the top staff and *poco p* in the bottom staff.

16

*mp*

*pp*

*lontano*

*pp* *lirico*

*p* *lirico*

Measures 16 and 17. The top staff has a slur over measures 16-17 and a triplet in measure 17. The bottom staff has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 16 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 17. Dynamics include *mp* in the top staff, *pp* and *lontano* in the bottom staff, and *pp* *lirico* and *p* *lirico* in the bottom staff.

19

*p* *espr.*

*mp*

Measures 19 and 20. The top staff has a slur over measures 19-20 and a triplet in measure 20. The bottom staff has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 19 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 20. Dynamics include *p* *espr.* in the top staff and *mp* in the bottom staff.

21

*poco*

24

*poco f espr.*

27

*mp* *f*

30

*mf* *poco* *pp dolcis.* *mf espres.*

*molto ritard* *a tempo -- placido*

*pp* *mp espres.*

33

*mf espr.*

*mp espr.*

*3 p poco lontano*

36

*poco rit.*

*p chiamata lontano*

*pp chiamata lontano*

*mp ominoso*

*mp cantabile*

39

*p cantabile*

*p cantabile*

42

*mf*

*poco f espr.*

*poco mf*

*poco f espr.*

45

ominoso

poco più agitato

a tempo ma strano, soprannaturale

48

mp

p

ominoso

p legato

mp ominoso

(ominoso)

51

mp

ominoso

p ominoso e strano

(p)

54

f

fmp

mf

mf

poco

cantabile

(p)

(unis.)

57

*mp* *omninoso* *mf* *poco parlando ma ben espressivo* *f*

*p* *misterioso e pazzo* *omninoso* *mf* *f*

60

*f* *mf* *ben p e omninoso*

*mp* *omninoso* *mf*

63

*f* *ff* *f* *mf* *f* *espressivo* *mf*

66

*ff* *molto* *mp* *pp luminoso lontano* *p*

*ff* *mp* *omninoso* *pp luminoso lontano*

70 *cantabile* *dolce*

73 (If possible, reach upper note by overblowing lower octave)

*pp* *con ardore* *mp* *cantabile*

76 *mf cantabile*

*p* *mp*

79 *mp* *mf* *p misterioso lontano*

*pp* *ben p lontano* *molto*



83

*mf espres. cantabile*

*mf espres.*

86

*mp dolce espr.*

*p dolce lontano*

89

*ritardando*

93

*p* *pp* *ppp*

*ppp*