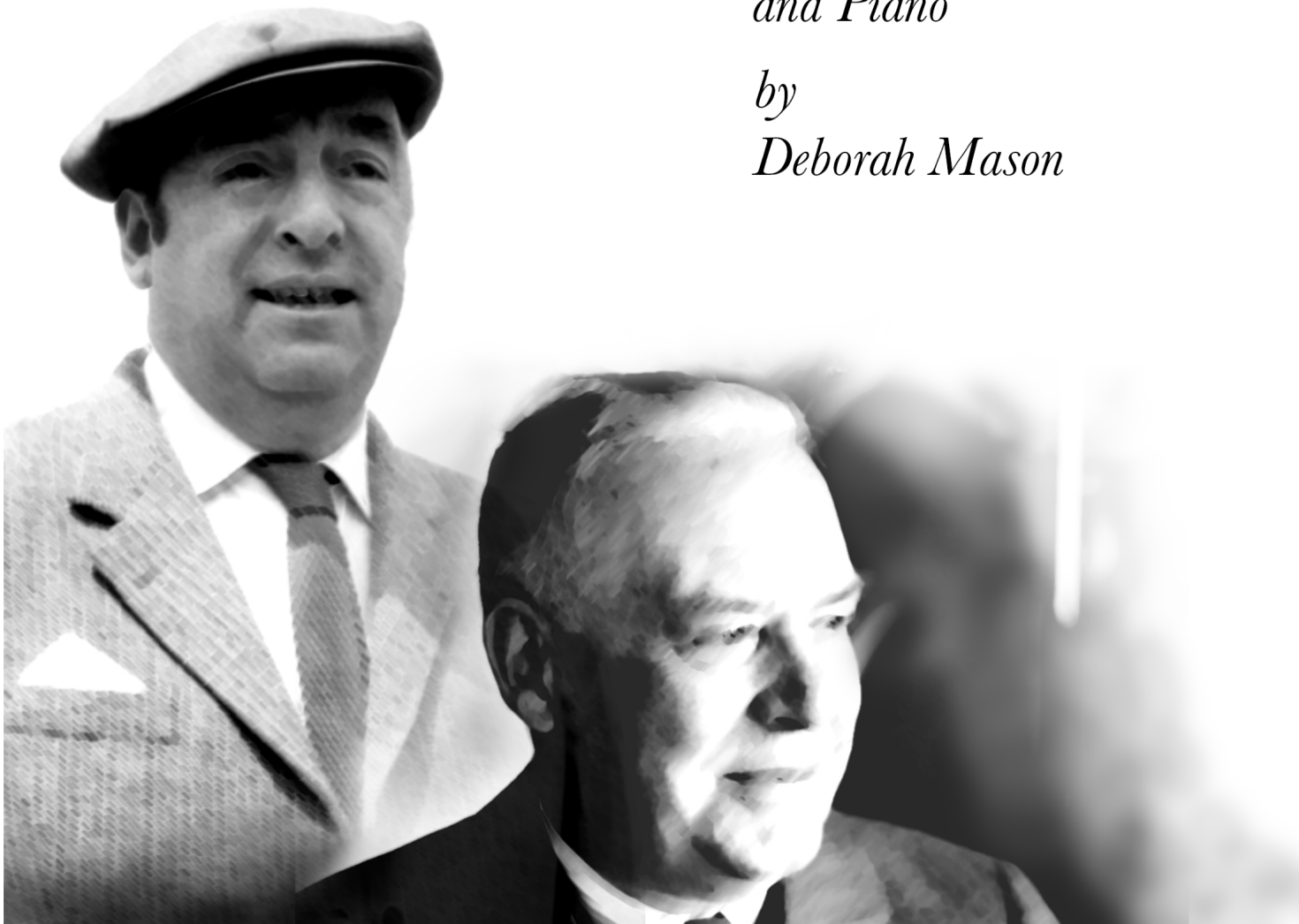


# *Ars Poetica*

*Poems by  
Wallace Stevens  
and  
Pablo Neruda*

*For  
Soprano and Baritone  
and Piano*

*by  
Deborah Mason*



Contact Deborah Mason

(914) 462-0280  
debmason1@aol.com

104 Pearsall Drive  
Apt. 1C  
Mount Vernon NY 10552

## *Foreward*

*I noticed the famous poem by Wallace Stevens years ago, and during the pandemic I went back to it as an expression of the need of the artist to create and the way that the Arts impact the listeners in new ways that they can now use as invisible guidelines like latitude and longitude lines to structure their own way forward in life.*

*However, there are no words in that poem for the singer who so inspires the Poet, and so after a great search for a poem in a different language so the two poems could be experienced simultaneously but on different planes, I discovered the poem by Pablo Neruda which is corresponding on so many levels I could hardly believe it. Both poets are Pulitzer Prize winners, and both poems are narrated on the shore, speak of the effect of the Arts on us all, with singing as the metaphor, and refer to the Artist as creating a new way forward to experience life on a higher plane.*

*- Deborah Mason November, 2021*

## The Idea of Order at Key West

She sang beyond the genius of the sea.  
The water never formed to mind or voice,  
Like a body wholly body, fluttering  
Its empty sleeves; and yet its mimic motion  
Made constant cry, caused constantly a cry,  
That was not ours although we understood,  
Inhuman, of the veritable ocean.

The sea was not a mask. No more was she.  
The song and water were not medleyed sound  
Even if what she sang was what she heard,  
Since what she sang was uttered word by word.  
It may be that in all her phrases stirred  
The grinding water and the gasping wind;  
But it was she and not the sea we heard.

For she was the maker of the song she sang.  
The ever-hooded, tragic-gestured sea  
Was merely a place by which she walked to sing.  
Whose spirit is this? we said, because we knew  
It was the spirit that we sought and knew  
That we should ask this often as she sang.

...

It was her voice that made  
The sky acutest at its vanishing.  
She measured to the hour its solitude.  
She was the single artificer of the world  
In which she sang. And when she sang, the sea,  
Whatever self it had, became the self  
That was her song, for she was the maker. Then we,  
As we beheld her striding there alone,  
Knew that there never was a world for her  
Except the one she sang and, singing, made.  
Ramon Fernandez, tell me, if you know,  
Why, when the singing ended and we turned  
Toward the town, tell why the glassy lights,  
The lights in the fishing boats at anchor there,  
As the night descended, tilting in the air,  
Mastered the night and portioned out the sea,  
Fixing emblazoned zones and fiery poles,  
Arranging, deepening, enchanting night.

...

- Wallace Stevens

## Pacaypallá

Ya está la tierra entorno  
de mi dándome vueltas  
como el metal al son de la campana

Ya está de cuanto amé  
mi pequeño universo,  
el sistema estrellado de las olas,  
el desorden abrupto de las piedras.  
Lejos, una ciudad con sus harapos,  
Llamándome, pobre sirena,  
para que nunca, no, se desamore  
mi corazón de sus duros deberes,

y yo con cielo y lira  
en la luz de lo que amo,  
inmóvil, indeciso,  
levantando la copa de mi canto.

Oh aurora desprendida  
de la sombra y la luna en el océano,  
siempre vuelvo a tu sal abrasadora,  
siempre es tu soledad la que me incita

y llegado otra vez no sé quien soy,  
toco la arena dura, miro el cielo,  
paseo sin saber dónde camino,  
hasta que de la noche  
suben y bajan flores indecibles:  
en el ácido aroma  
del litoral palpitan las estrellas.

...

Now the earth is spinning round me,  
dizzying me,  
like metal at the sound of bells.

Now I have all I have loved  
within my little universe,  
the starred order of waves,  
the sudden disorder of stones.  
Far off, a city in rags calling me,  
poor siren,  
so that my heart can never, no,  
scorn its weight of obligation,

and I with sky and poems  
in the light of all I love  
poised here, indecisive,  
raising the cup of my song

Oh dawn, breaking out of the shadow  
and the moon in the sea,  
always I come back to your burning salt.  
always it is your solitude which draws me

and, back once more, I don't know who I am.  
I touch the hard sand, I look at the sky.  
I walk without knowing where I'm going  
until out of the night  
indescribable flowers rise and fall:  
in the salty air  
of the coast the stars tremble.

...

-Pablo Neruda



# Ars Poetica

For Soprano and Baritone

Poems by Wallace Stevens  
and  
Pablo Neruda

Deborah Mason

**Andante** (♩ = 92) *Rubato, quasi recit or giusto, rushing or lingering as per singers*

Soprano

Baritone

Piano

*mp* Profoundly throughout

She sang be-yond the gen - ius of the sea.

*mp* *Red.*

*tr*

*much pedal througout, with a gentle, hollow resonance, notes lingering everywhere*

S

B

Pno.

*mp* *With Joyful Delight*

Ya es-tá la tie-rra en -

*Red.*

Ars Poetica

11

S  
tor - no en - tor - no de mi \_\_\_\_\_ dán - do - me

B

Pno.

15

S  
vue - ltas co - mo el me - tal al son de la cam - pa - na

B

Pno.

The

*p*

*Red.* *mp*

3

Ars Poetica

The ancient gods did not materialize  
despite the magic of the moment

Happily Content

21

S

B

Pno.

wa - ter \_\_ nev - er formed \_\_\_\_\_ to mind or

Ya es-tá de cuan-to a - mé

*mp*

Inwardly Ecstatic

27

S

B

Pno.

mi pe-que-ño u - ni - ver - - - so, \_\_\_\_\_

voice, nev - er formed \_\_\_\_\_ to mind or

*mp* *p* *tr* *p*

Ars Poetica

33

S

B

Pno.

voice, like a bo - dy \_\_\_\_\_ whol - ly bo - dy, \_\_\_\_\_ flut-ter-ing Its emp -

*mp* *sed.*

39

S

B

Pno.

ty sleeves; and

*p* *f*

*mp* *sed.* *tr*

Ars Poetica

42

S

B

Pno.

yet and yet its mim-ic mo - tion made con-stant cry, — caused con-stant-ly a cry, —

46

S

B

Pno.

— that was not ours though we un-der - stood, in - hum - an, of the ver - i - ta - ble

Ars Poetica

51

S

B

Pno.

o - - - - - cean.

*mf*

*tr tr tr*

*pp*

*p*

55

S

B

Pno.

Ya es - tá de cuanto a - mé \_\_\_\_\_ cuan-to a - mé

*mp*

*3*

*tr*

Ars Poetica

59 *Clearly, Magically*

S  
el si - ste - ma e - stre - lla - do \_\_\_\_\_

B

Pno.

63

S  
de \_\_\_\_\_ las o - las, \_\_\_\_\_

B

Pno.

Ars Poetica

*Delighted*

65

S  
el de - sor - den a -

B

Pno.

67

S  
brup - to de las pied - ras.

B  
The

Pno.

Ars Poetica

71 *mp*

S  
Le - jos, \_\_\_\_\_ Le - jos, \_\_\_\_\_

B  
sea was not a mask. \_\_\_\_\_ No more was she. The song and

Pno. *p*

76 *poco meno*

S  
\_\_\_\_\_ u - na ci - u - dad con

B  
wa - ter were not med-leyed sound \_\_\_\_\_

Pno. *tr*

Ars Poetica

79

S  
sus ha - ra - pos,

B  
e ven if what she sang was what she heard, since what she sang was ut - tered word by

Pno.

83

*mf*

S  
u-na ci-u-dad Lla - mán - do - me,

B  
word. It maybe that in her phra-ses stirred the grind-ing wa - ter

Pno.

*p*

Ars Poetica

87 *allargando* *The Burden of the Artist is stoically borne*

S

B

Pno.

Lla - mán-do-me, po-bre si - re - na, \_\_\_\_\_  
and the gasp - ing wind; \_\_\_\_\_ but it was

91 *We are witnessing Art*

S

B

Pno.

she \_\_\_\_\_ and not the sea we heard. \_\_\_\_\_ For she was the

*mf* *mp* *mf*

Ars Poetica

95 *mp* *mp*

S Pa - ra — Pa-ra que nun-ca, *ironically* no,

B ma - ker of the song she sang. — the ev-er-hood - ed, tragic-ges-tured sea

Pno. *mp*

101 *Stoic* *Poco Meno*

S nun-ca, se des - a - mo-re mi co-ra - zón de sus

B was mere - ly a place by which she walked \_\_\_\_\_

Pno. *mf*

Ars Poetica

With a Saitly Sweetness

105

S dur - os de - ber - es, y

B to sing.

Pno. *mf* *p*

108

S yo con cie - lo y li - - -

B

Pno. *p*

Ars Poetica

111

S  
ra En la luz de lo que a - - -

B

Pno.

*mf*

*sed. mp*

115

S  
- - - mo, In - mó - vil,

B

Pno.

*Vulnerable*  
*mp*

*p*

*mf*

Ars Poetica

118

S

B

*delicately*

*mp*

*mf*

in - de - ci - so, —

Whose \_\_\_\_\_ spir - it is this? Whose

Pno.

*p*

5

5

5

6

*red.*

122

S

B

*Full of hope and love and Art*

Le - van - tan - do la

spir - it is this?

Pno.

*p*

3

5

3

Ars Poetica

125

S

co - pa de mi can - to. la co - pa — de mi

B

Pno.

5

mp

mf

mf

3

5

allargando

130

S

can - to. Levan - tan - do la co - pa de mi can -

B

Pno.

3

5

Ars Poetica

135

S

B

Pno.

to. de mi can - to.

5

*And.* 3 5

Expansive

139

S

B

Pno.

*f* It was her voice \_\_\_\_\_ that made The sky a -

6

*And.* 3

Ars Poetica

The impermanene of Art and of Life

145

S

B

*mp* *mf* *mp*

cu - test at its van-ish-ing. — She mea-sured to the hour — its so-li-tude. —

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 145 through 150. The Soprano part consists of six measures of whole rests. The Bass part begins with a melodic line starting on a dotted quarter note, with lyrics 'cu - test at its van-ish-ing.' followed by a bar line. The next measure has a half note with lyrics 'She mea-sured to the hour' and a bar line. The final measure has a dotted quarter note with lyrics 'its so-li-tude.' and a bar line. Dynamics are marked *mp* at the start, *mf* in the second measure, and *mp* at the end. The Piano accompaniment features arpeggiated chords and melodic fragments in both hands.

From our prosaic life we look to the arts

151

S

B

*mf*

— Then we, As we be-held her strid - ing there a - lone, Knew —

Pno.

*pp*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 151 through 156. The Soprano part consists of six measures of whole rests. The Bass part begins with a melodic line starting on a dotted quarter note, with lyrics '— Then we, As we be-held her strid - ing there a - lone, Knew —' and a bar line. Dynamics are marked *mf* at the start. The Piano accompaniment features arpeggiated chords and melodic fragments in both hands, ending with a *pp* dynamic marking.

Ars Poetica

157

S

B

*mp*

that there nev - er was a world \_\_\_\_\_ for her

Pno.

*p*

3

5

161

*poco piu*

S

B

*mp*

*mf*

Except the one she sang and, sing - ing, made.

Pno.

*mp*

*mf*

3

3

Ars Poetica

167

S

B

Pno.

*mp*

*p*

*mp* *Red.*

Oh au - ro - - - ra des - pren -

171

S

B

Pno.

*p*

*6*

*5*

*6*

Poignant

di - - - da dela som - bra \_\_\_\_\_ y la lu - - -

Ars Poetica

Expansive

the beauty and experience of certitude and of joy in the presence of the sea

176

S

na en el o - cé-a - no, en el o - cé-a - no, siem -

B

Pno.

*mp* *Red.*

182

S

- pre siem-pre vuel-vo a tu sal a-bra-sa - dor - a siem - pre

B

Pno.

*poco rit.* **Poco Meno**

*p*

Ars Poetica

the beauty of a single human being, the self, as capable of poetic heights

186

S

siem - pre es tu so - le - dad la que me in-

B

Pno.

*mf* *mp*

190

S

ci - ta \_\_\_\_\_ y lle-

B

Pno.

*mf* *mp* 3

Ars Poetica

194

S

ga - do y lle - ga - do

B

Pno.

*mp*

197

S

o - tra vez y lle - ga-do o-tra vez vez no

B

Pno.

*Ars Poetica*

203

S

seé quien soy, to - co la a - re - na du - ra, mi - ro el cie - lo, \_\_\_\_\_

B

Pno.

210

S

— pa - se - o sin sa - ber dón - de ca - mi - no, has - ta que de la

B

Pno.

Ars Poetica

215

S

*poco meno* *p*

no - che su - ben y ba - jan flo - res

B

Pno.

*mp*

221

S

*mp*

in - de - ci - bles: en el á - ci - doa - ro - ma del

B

Pno.

*p*

Ars Poetica

226

S  
li - to - ral pal - pi - tan \_\_\_\_\_ las es - tre - llas. \_\_\_\_\_

B

Pno.

*p*

*pp*

232

S

B  
Ra - mon \_\_\_\_\_ tell Why, when the

Pno.

*sed.*

3

Ars Poetica

239

S

B

Pno.

sing - ing end-ed and we turned Toward the town, why the glassy lights, the

245

S

B

Pno.

boatsat an-chor there, As night des - cend - ed, tilt-ing in the air, \_\_\_\_\_

Ars Poetica

The Artist gives us new markers like latitude lines or the North and South Poles that help us understand where we are and how to navigate

250

S

B

Pno.

Mas - tered the night and por - tioned out the sea,

255

S

B

Pno.

*rit.*

Fix - ing em - bla - zoned zones and fier - y poles, Ar - rang -

Ars Poetica

261

S

B

Pno.

ing, deep-en - ing, en - chant - ing night.

3

*sed.*

267

S

B

Pno.

*pp*

5