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POL REQUESENS ROCA

Acadian Elegies

twelve part-songs for mixed choir, piano and percussion

Text by Emile LeBrun

Acadian Elegies

twelve part-songs for mixed choir, piano and percussion from a text by Emile LeBrun

Commissioned by Emile LeBrun

Commentary

Acadian Elegies originates with a book of the same title¹ by Emile LeBrun, who commissioned me to create a musical adaptation of this work. LeBrun's book is constructed out of sentences from obituaries of 20th century men from the era of his father, who he never met. The original text is divided into 24 parts that combine hundreds of sentences of daily life, emotions, and significant events from the lives of both notable and common people.

From this material I made a selection as the source text for a choir composition of approximately 20-25 minutes' duration. I made a personal choice of texts, using sentences and scattered words and phrases from 12 of the 24 parts of the book according to my perception and feelings for the text and its artistic potential. My intention was to both maintain the original meaning of the whole book as well as create new interactions and meanings provided by the texts.

The musical piece is divided into 12 parts, in keeping with the unity of the work as a whole. The contrast of the calm of the everyday life and the tragic or joyful moments in the narratives is transferred in many ways to music, although the use of the choir in pseudorecitatives is notable and the use of piano and percussion to enhance the musical discourse also stands out. The ultimate aim is to create an ambience of respect and contemplation along with bursts of pleasure and sorrow, always with a bright and optimistic perspective.

P.R.R.

¹ LeBrun, Emile (2021). Acadian Elegies. Amsterdam: Collapsible Press.

Performance notes

1. Voice and percussion arrangement:

A minimum of 24 voices is recommended to perform this piece. The division of the choir changes throughout the piece, from four-part mixed division (SATB) to eight-part mixed division (SSAATTBB). The solo parts and the whistling parts are to be performed by members of the choir.

The percussion part will be performed by one percussionist and by members of the choir.

Instrumental set:

- Vibraphone
- Glockenspiel
- Crotales
- Thai Nipple Gongs (chromatic scale from D3 to D#4)
 (Played by the percussionist and punctually by a singer)
- 2 Suspended cymbals (18' and 26')
 (Played by the percussionist and punctually by a singer)
- 3 Tom-toms
- 2 Triangles
 (One for the percussionist and another for a singer)
- Windchimes
- 4 Tibetan bowls tuned in C, G, F and Bb (Played only by singers)

It is advisable to perform the piece in places with a slight reverberation, such as concert halls or churches.

The arrangement on stage of the choir, piano and percussion as well as the costumes and staging must be austere and clean.

2. About voice, effects and notation:

Note heads with a descending or ascending triangular shape $(\nabla \nabla / \triangle \Delta)$ are to be sung

as low or high as possible.

Note heads with a square shape (□■) are clusters.

Continuous lines between notes are glissandos, that should be performed in the most

lineal and strict way possible.

A straight thick line on the inside the staff after a note indicates the sustain of the

tone (only in number IX. San Juan).

As a rule, there will be no vibration unless it is noted on the score.

As a rule, there are not indications of breathings. Each singer will breathe freely

without synchronisation with the other singers.

Timbre of the voice:

• Nv: normal voice.

o Dv: dark voice, not nasal and covered.

• Bv: bright voice, more nasal and harmonically rich.

∘ **Wv**: whispered voice (note head with a diamond shape (◊ •)).

The whistling part is written in treble clef one octave higher.

When the text appears in square brackets ([m]) must be pronounced as phonemes,

which is written with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

A dotted line between two phonemes indicates a progressive change from the first

to the second.

Duration: approx. 22 minutes

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Pol Requesens Roca

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I. Regret colors the narrative



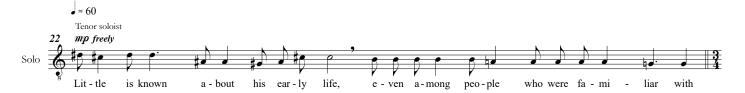
Ped. (always L.V. with the harmony)







II. Little is known about his early life































^{*:} Change freely and gradually the vowel phonemes. The voice timbre must be nasal, harmonically rich.



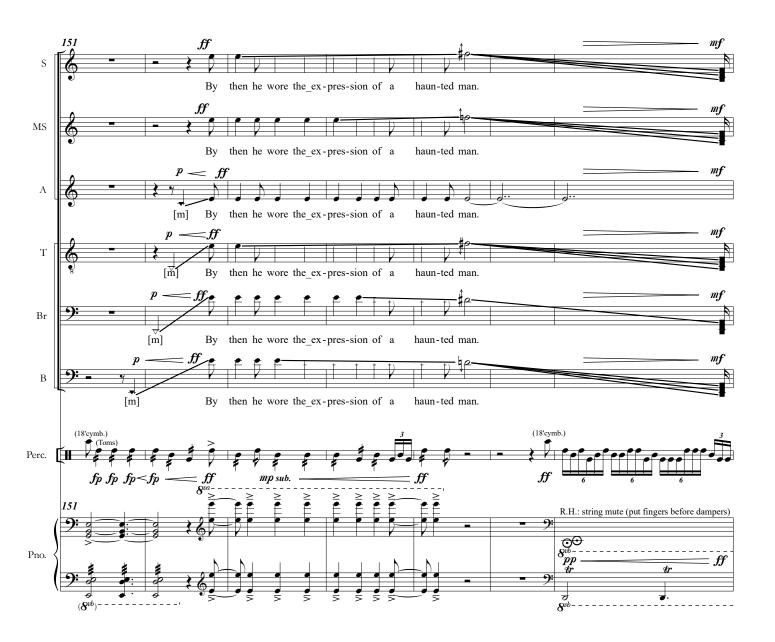
^{*:} Nv: normal voice timbre / Bv: bright voice timbre, more nasal and harmonically rich / Dv: dark voice timbre, not nasal and covered.

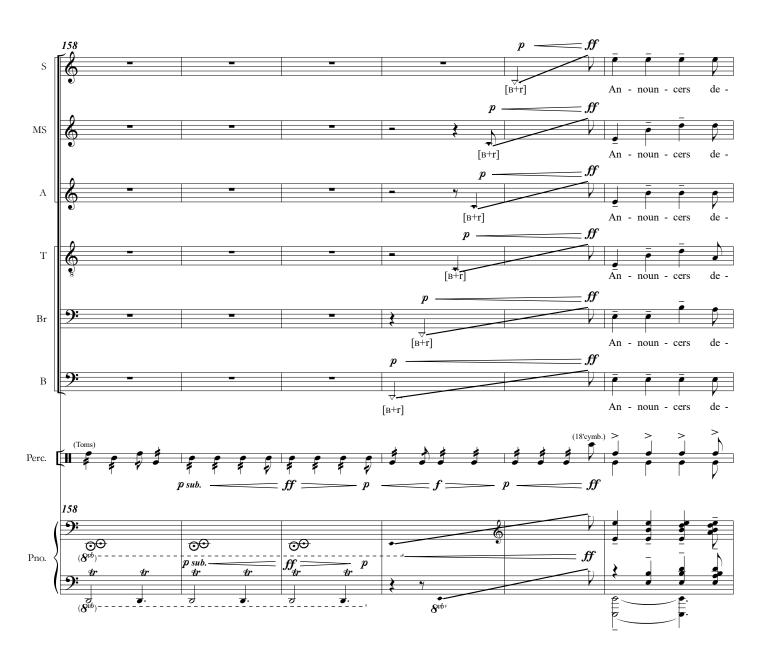




^{*:} Half or a third of the male voices make a slow, lineal glissando.









^{*:} Clusters. Freely follow the melodic line.

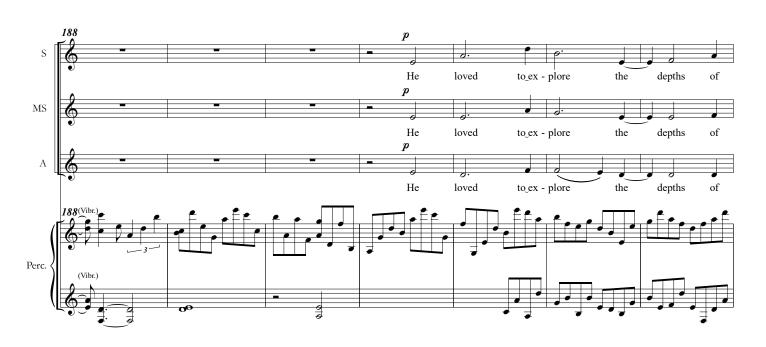




VIII. We shall be alive













- *1: The singers enter gradually. The number of voices is specified on the basis of a 24-voice choir.
- *2: Abbreviations are used for ease of reading (EH: East Harlem, TA: Third Avenue, NY: New York, etc.).





















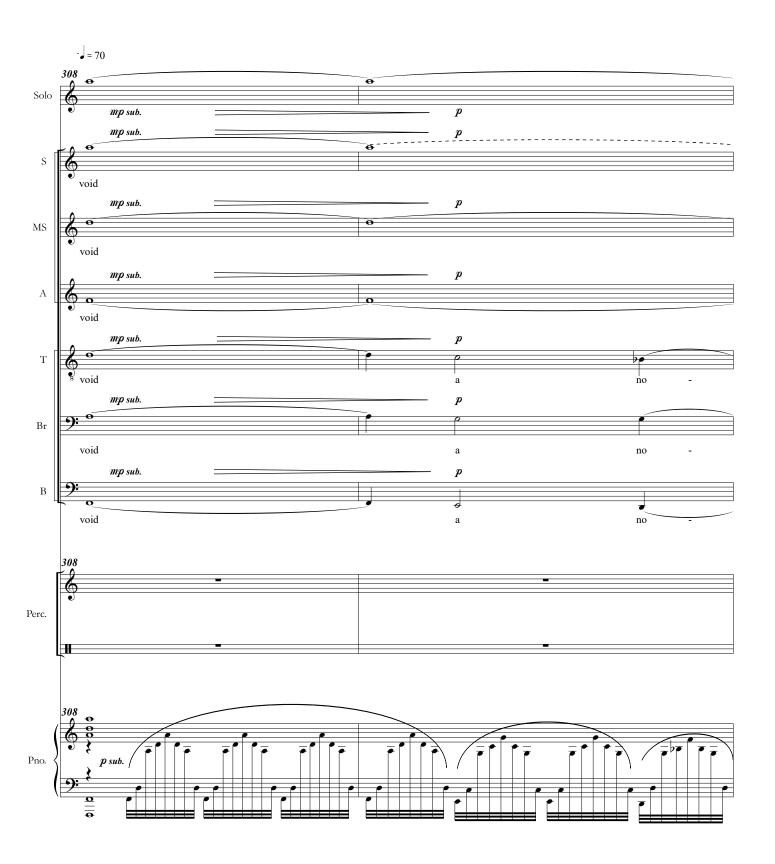


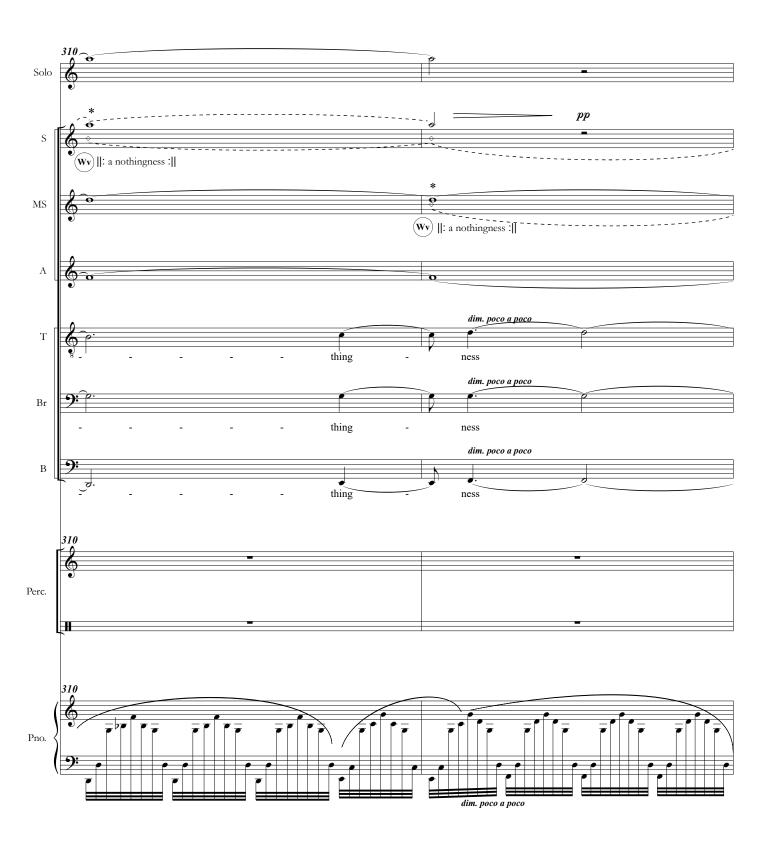




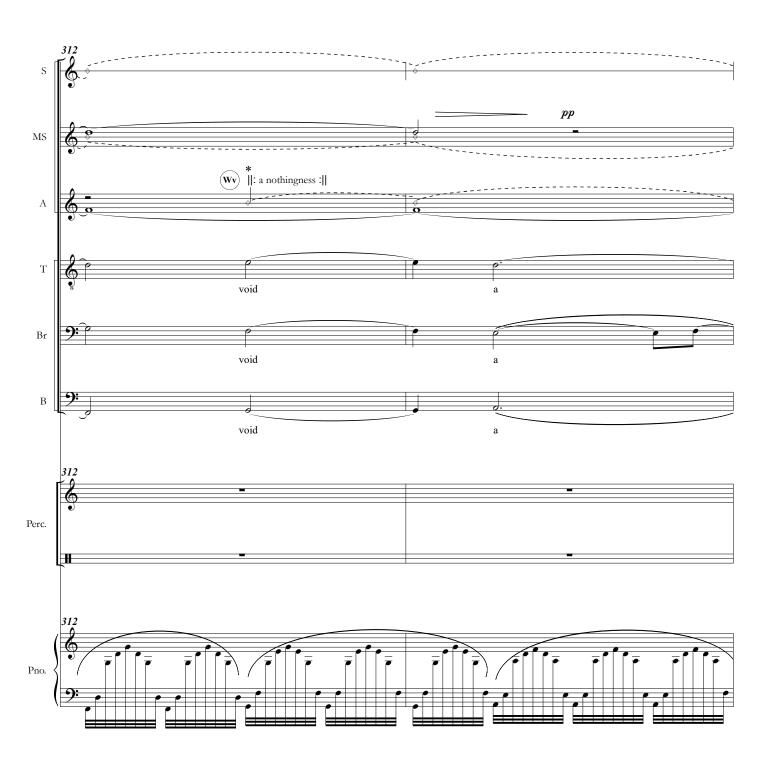








^{*:} Gradually the singers stop singing and start whispering freely as many times as they please.



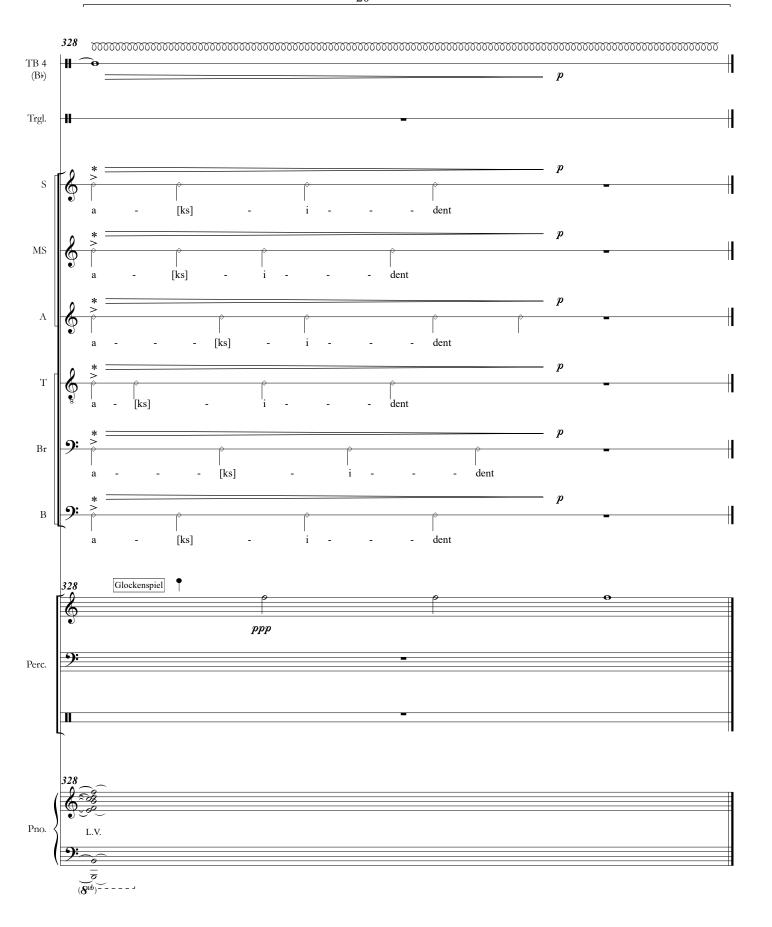




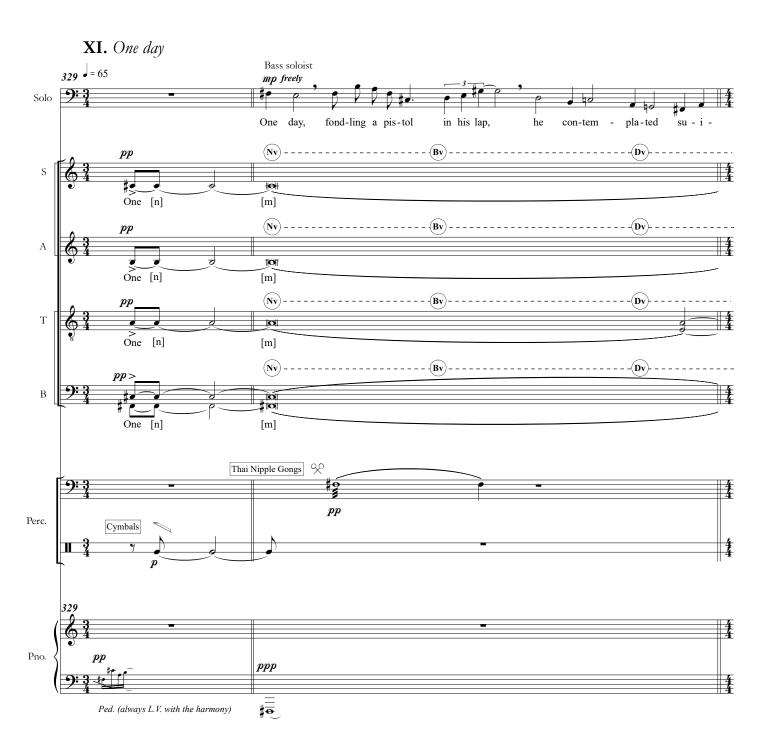


(accel. poco a poco) MS Love Joy $f_{>}$ cresc. Love В Perc.





^{*:} Only the entrance should be synchronized. The text must be whispered just once, lengthening the syllables or phonemes with a single breath.





^{*:} Singing as an echo of the soloist by no more than 2 or 3 singers per voice.

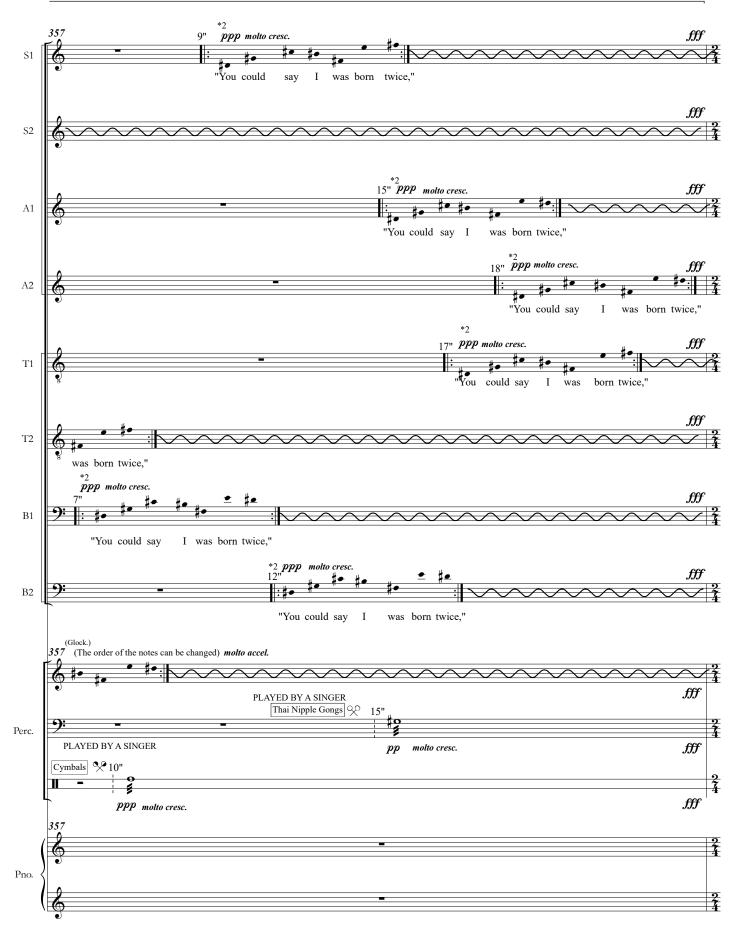


XII. Born

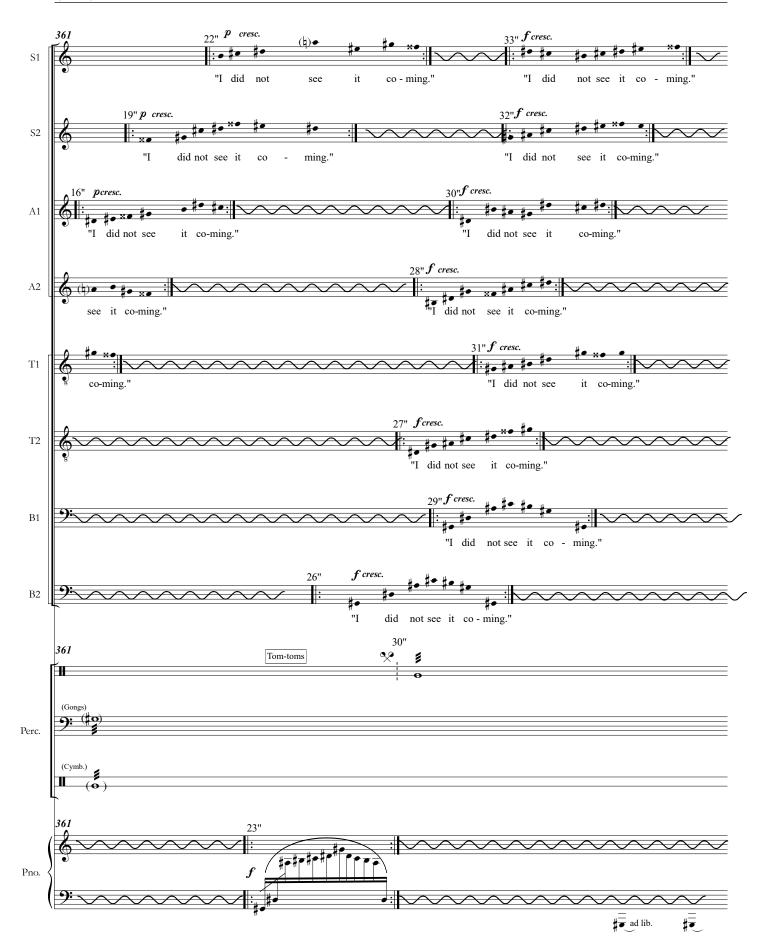




^{*1:} As long as possible.
*2: Each singer sings on its own, freely and repeatedly, enlarging or diminishing a little the rhthmic values of the original melody.









J = 50

