

Israel Lai (2023)

Porthladd

for flute, viola, and harp

Porthladd is an ode to two harbours, one in my hometown Hong Kong, and one in Cardiff, where the piece is premiered. It responds to the theme of 'identities', a theme that strikes a chord with me, as someone who's frequently pondering dynamics between identities in both of these countries.

Harbours embody contrasting things. The word 'porthladd' is comprised of two parts: 'porth', meaning gate, portal, and 'ladd', which comes from a word that originally meant quiet. A harbour is a gateway to the wider world, the first step in seafaring; but also the first point of arrival, a safe haven from the storms of the sea. *Porthladd* contrasts and dips in and out of various boxes: harmonic, rhythmic, etc., thus highlighting the inward- and outward-facing aspects of a harbour—also a metaphor for inward and outward faces of one's identity, as exemplified by a person's different names.

Written for Trio Anima, for a workshop and concert at the BFE/RMA Research Students' Conference, Jan 2024.

Performance notes

Accidentals apply to the immediate note only.

All harp tremolos denote bisbigliando, where possible.

Harp harmonics are notated at the written pitch, one octave below the sounding pitch.

o.b.: overblow.

Porthladd

Israel Lai

(♩ = c. 60)

repeat A, but replace with B once in a while

Flute

pp *rapide*

mf

fpp

Viola

repeat this material, but interrupt with following notes and return

pp *rapide, change bow freely and smoothly*

pizz.

mf

Harp

p.d.l.t.

mp

-10''-

Porthladd

Fl. [1] insert breaks similarly to above -5" -5"

Vla. pizz. f arco pp

Hp

Fl. 2 with harp f wide vib. dim. poco a poco -10"

Vla.

Hp f Eb F# Ab p

[2] -7" ♩ = c. 60

Fl. *p*

Vla. *mf* *p* *f* *p*

Hp. *ord.* *gliss.* *cresc.*

4

Fl. *f* slightly indistinctly,
rhythm not strict
arco

Vla. *f* pizz.

Hp. *f*

6

Fl. *tr* *pp* *f* *p*

Vla. *pp* *f* *p*

Hp

10"

as beginning

Fl. *pp* *rapide* *mf* *fpp*

Vla. *pp* *rapide, change bow freely and smoothly* *mf* *pizz.* *pizz.*

Hp *E♭ F♭ A♯* *mp* *p.d.l.t.*

The musical score is for three instruments: Flute (Fl.), Viola (Vla.), and Harp (Hp), in 5/4 time. The score is divided into three measures by vertical bar lines. Above the first two measures, a dashed line indicates a 5-measure span. The Flute part begins with a measure marked [10] and contains a melodic line with a box around it labeled "insert breaks similarly to above". The second measure of the Flute part is marked "with harp" and "f wide vib.", and also has a box around it. The Viola part starts with a measure marked "f" and "arco", followed by a measure marked "pp" and "arco" (boxed), then a measure marked "pizz." and a final measure marked "arco". The Harp part features a measure with notes Eb, b, b, and a measure with notes Eb, b, b, and a final measure marked "ord." and "p".

Fl. [10] insert breaks similarly to above with harp f wide vib.

Vla. f arco pp arco

Hp. Eb b b f ord. p

Porthladd

11

Fl.

Vla.

Hp

p *f*

mf *p cresc.*

f

cresc. *gliss.*

f

f

f

f

slightly indistinctly,
rhythm not strict
arco
pizz.

13

Fl.

Vla.

Hp

pp

fr. *s. b.*

3 3 3

16

Fl.

Vla

Hp

f *p* *pp*

f *p*

22 *Flowing* ♩ = 80

Fl.

Vla

Hp

mf espr.

p *f* *p* *p* *f* *p*

p

slow down bisbig.

29

Fl. *c.a. d.*

Vla. *f* *mf-p* *p marcato* *3* *3* *3* *3*

Hp *mf-p* *f* *p* *f* *E♭ Ab C♯* *B♭*

speed up bisbig.

35

Fl. *c.a. d.*

Vla. *mp* *p* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5* *5*

Hp *E♭* *C♯*

40

Fl. *mf espr.*

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

Hp

46

Fl. *mp cresc.* *f* *flz.*

Vla *mp* *speeding up* *slowing down* *ff*

Hp *G# A#* *D# B#*

ord.

51

Fl.

Vla

Hp

ff

f

G \sharp

Ab

Db

E \flat F \flat

D \sharp

as beginning

53

Fl.

Vla

Hp

pp rapide

pp rapide

fp

F \sharp

b \sharp

5"

5"

54 cue harp

Fl. *f* *n*

Vla. *f* pizz. arco 3 3 3 3

Hp *f* *very freely* G# D# C#

58 Pesante ♩ = 80

Fl. *ff* 3

Vla. *f* pizz.

Hp *ff* *mp* *ff* *mp* *ff* *mp* *ff* *mp*

Chords: A# C# Eb E# D# Db Eb D# C# C#

Porthladd

repeat as long as one breath

64

Fl. *very slowly* *ppp* **Freely** *p lontano*

Vla.

Hp *ff* *mp* *ff*

69

Fl. **Held back** ♩ = 100

Vla. *mp* without accents, senza vib. arco sul tasto, flautando *sim.*

Hp *p*

79

Fl. *pp*

Vla *pp*

Hp
Eb
D# C#

87

Fl. *mf poco vib.* *f espr. ord.* *p*

Vla *mp* *mf* *p*

Hp
Ab
D# *mf* Fb

slow down