

OLIVER KNUSSEN

SYMPHONY No. 2

for high soprano and chamber orchestra

Op.7

(1970-71)

poems by Georg Trakl and Sylvia Plath

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Duration approximately 17 minutes

This work was commissioned for the second Windsor Festival,
and first performed in a preliminary version consisting of the first three movements in
the Waterloo Chamber at Windsor Castle on 3rd October 1970
by Poppy Holden and the Menuhin Festival Orchestra conducted by Yehudi Menuhin

The first complete performance was given
at the Theater Concert-Hall, Tanglewood, Mass. on 18th August 1971
by Poppy Holden and the Berkshire Music Center Orchestra
conducted by Gunther Schuller

The British première was given
at the Round House, London as part of the Camden Festival on 21st March 1976
by Jane Manning and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
conducted by Elgar Howarth

This work was awarded the Margaret Grant Composition Prize, Tanglewood 1971
Symphony No. 2 is recorded on Unicorn-Kanchana DKP9027 (cassette DKPC 9027)
by Elaine Barry and the London Sinfonietta conducted by the composer

ORCHESTRA

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in B \flat
2 Bassoons

2 Horns in F

Soprano solo  or 

4 Antique Cymbals (optional – see note 5 below)

6 First Violins
6 Second Violins
4 Violas
4 Violoncelli
2 Doublebasses

All instruments are written in C in the score.

The Doublebass is written in the usual octave transposition.

NOTES

1. The seating is standard, with all violins to the conductor's left and 'celli on the outside right. The horns should be directly behind the woodwinds (straight ahead of the conductor), and slightly raised.
2. The whole piece should be played with virtually no vibrato – the *dynamics* should be used expressively.
3. Glissandi should start immediately a note has begun and cover the whole duration specified.
4. The four pairs of wind cadenzas (Bassoons at **[38]**, oboes at **[39]**, Clarinets at 1 before **[41]**, Flutes at 2nd bar of **[43]**) should be played following individual instructions, without regard for alignment in the score, including that between the two free parts.
Bassoons should be finished before **[39]**, Oboes before **[41]**, and Clarinets by the 5th bar of **[43]** at the latest. These stopping-points should be rehearsed. *Either* of the flutes may finish the work.
5. On pp. 72-74 there is an optional part for 4 bowed Antique Cymbals played by 4 percussionists. If these are used they should encircle the orchestral strings, sitting behind the back desks of the string quartet. The Antique Cymbals may also be pre-recorded on tape and played back discreetly in performance, fading out at **[43]**.

I Weisser Schlaf
Aufflattern weisse Vögel am Nachtsaum.
Ihr mondverschlungnen Schatten!

Die Nacht tanzt
über knöchernen Steg.

Stone, stone, ferry me down there.

(lines from assorted poems of Trakl & Plath)

White sleep!
White birds fly off on the hem of night.
Their moon-wrapped shadows!

The night dances
Over the bone footbridge

DIE RATTEN

Im Hof scheint weiss der herbstliche Mond.
Vom Dachrand fallen phantastische Schatten.
Ein Schweigen in leeren Fenstern wohnt;
Da tauchen leise herauf die Ratten

II Und huschen pfeifend hier und dort
Und ein gräulicher Dunsthauch wittert
Ihnen nach aus dem Abort,
Den geisterhaft der Mondschein durchzittert

Und sie keifen vor Gier wie toll
Und erfüllen Haus und Scheunen,
Die von Korn und Früchten voll.
Eisige Winde im Dunkel greinen.

[Georg Trakl]

THE RATS

In the yard the autumnal moon shines white.
From the roof-edge fantastic shadows fall.
A silence dwells in empty windows;
Through which the rats dive softly upward

And flit about squeaking here and there
And a grey dust-haze lingers
After them from the latrine,
Through which the moonlight shivers, spectral.

And they scramble in greed, as if mad
And overflow houses and sheds
Full of corn and fruit.
Icy winds groan in darkness.

III

EDGE

The woman is perfected
Her dead

Body wears the smile of accomplishment,
The illusion of a Greek necessity

Flows in the scrolls of her toga,
Her bare

Feet seem to be saying:
We have come so far, it is over.

Each dead child coiled, a white serpent,
One at each little

Fitcher of milk, now empty.
She has folded

Them back into her body as petals
Of a rose close when the garden

Stiffens and odours bleed
From the sweet, deep throats of the night flower.

The moon has nothing to be sad about,
Staring from her hood of bone.

She is used to this sort of thing.
Her blacks crackle and drag.

[Sylvia Plath]

IV

AN DIE SCHWESTER

Wo du gehst wird Herbst und Abend,
Blaues Wild, das unter Bäumen tönt,
Einsamer Weiher am Abend.

Leise der Flug der Vögel tönt,
Die Schwermut über deinen Augenbogen.
Dein schmales Lächeln tönt.

Gott hat deine Lider verbogen.
Sterne suchen nachts, Karfreitagskind,
Deinen Stirnenbogen.

[Georg Trakl]

When you awoke, the bells in the village were ringing.
Through the eastern gate showed, silver, the rosy day.
(from *Winternacht* – Trakl).

TO THE SISTER

Where you go is Autumn and Evening,
A blue deer, that sounds under trees,
A lonely pond at evening.

Softly sounds the flight of birds,
The anguish over your brow.
Your slight smiling sounds.

God has altered the curve of your eyelids,
Stars seek at night, Good Friday's child,
Your forehead's curve.

SYMPHONY NO.2

Oliver Knussen op.7 (1970-71)

I. Allegro $\text{♩} = 144-160$

flutes 1 & 2, oboes 1 & 2, clarinet 1 & 2, bassoons 1 & 2

Woodwind section score for the first system. It includes parts for flutes (1 and 2), oboes (1 and 2), clarinets (1 and 2), and bassoons (1 and 2). The music is in 3/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns with many triplets and slurs. Dynamic markings include *p sempre* and *pp*.

horn 1 & 2, voice

Horn and voice section score for the first system. It includes parts for horns (1 and 2) and a voice part. The horn parts have dynamic markings like *pp* and *ppp*. The voice part is mostly rests. A rehearsal mark *trid* is present with the instruction "Breathe imperceptibly ad lib., but never at pitch changes!".

Allegro $\text{♩} = 144-160$

violin I desks (1, 2/3 div.), violin II desks (1, 2/3 div.), viola desks (1, 2), violoncello desks (1, 2), double bass

String section score for the first system. It includes parts for violin I (desk 1, desks 2/3 div.), violin II (desk 1, desks 2/3 div.), viola (desk 1, desk 2), violoncello (desk 1, desk 2), and double bass (desk 1, desk 2). The music is in 3/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns with many triplets and slurs. Dynamic markings include *ppp sempre*, *pizz*, *arco*, *gliss*, and *legato sempre*.

1

fl. 1
fl. 2
ob. 1
ob. 2
cl. 1
cl. 2

Musical score for flutes (fl.), oboes (ob.), and clarinets (cl.). The score is written in 3/4 time and includes dynamic markings such as *ff* and *fz*. The woodwinds play complex rhythmic patterns with many slurs and ties.

h.c.

Musical score for horn and trumpet (h.c.). The score is written in 3/4 time and features a melodic line with some slurs.

desk 1
vlns. I
desk 2/3
vlns. II
desk 1
desk 2/3
vlas.
desk 1
desk 2
vics.
desk 1
desk 2
db.

Musical score for strings (vlns. I, vlns. II, vlas., vics.) and double bass (db.). The score is written in 3/4 time and includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *mf*, *fz*, and *ppp*. The string parts feature complex rhythmic patterns with many slurs and ties. A large blue watermark "PREVIEW FILE ONLY" is overlaid on the score.

2

fl. { 1, 2 }
ob. { 1, 2 }
cl. { 1, 2 }

hn. { 1, 2 }

19
vlns. I { desk 1, desk 2/3 }
vlns. II { desk 1, desk 2/3 }
vlas. { desk 1, desk 2 }
vlcs. { desk 1, desk 2 }
db. { 1, 2 }

fl. 1 & 2

ob. 1 & 2

cl. 1 & 2

bsa. 1 & 2

This section of the score covers measures 26 through 31. It features two parts for each instrument: flutes (fl.), oboes (ob.), clarinets (cl.), and bassoons (bsa.). The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. A large bracket spans across the top of the woodwind staves, indicating a specific performance instruction or phrasing.

ha. 1 & 2

This section covers measures 26 through 31 for the horn section (ha.). It consists of two staves per instrument, showing rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

deck 1

vlns. I

decks 2/3

deck 2

vlns. II

decks 2/3

deck 1

vlas. desk 2

deck 1

vics. desk 2

deck 1

db. 1 & 2

This section covers measures 26 through 31 for the string and double bass section. It includes parts for Violins I (vlns. I), Violins II (vlns. II), Violas (vlas.), Violas (vics.), and Double Basses (db.). The notation shows rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A large blue watermark reading 'Preview File Only' is overlaid diagonally across the entire page.

as if suddenly cut off by the turn of a switch.

senza tempo (5 secs. ca.)

fl. 1
fl. 2
ob. 1
ob. 2
cl. 1
cl. 2
bn. 1
bn. 2

hn. 1
hn. 2

33

voice

slowly, to herself
pp

wei - sser Schlaf!

senza tempo (5 secs. ca.)

vlns. I
deak 1
deak 2/3

vlns. II
deak 1
deak 2/3

vlas.
deak 1
deak 2

vics.
deak 1
deak 2

db.
1
2

4 a tempo (♩=144-160) as if suddenly switched on again.

fl. 1
fl. 2
ob. 1
cl. 1
cl. 2
bsn. 1
bsn. 2
hn. 1
hn. 2

breathe imperceptibly ad lib. except at pitch changes!

4 a tempo (♩=144-160)

deck 1
vins. I
deck 2/3
deck 1
vins. II
dbits 2/3
deck 1
vlas.
deck 2
deck 1
vles.
deck 2
db. 1
db. 2

5

ft. 1, 2
ob. 1, 2
cl. 1, 2
bsn. 1, 2

44

5

vlns. I desk 1, desks 2/3
vlns. II desk 1, desks 2/3
vlas. desk 1, desk 2
vics. desk 1, desk 2
db. 1, 2

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A tempo nuovo:
17 Scorrevole ♩ = 90 ca.

fl. 1 & 2
ob. 1 & 2
cl. 1 & 2
bn. 1 & 2
hn. 1 & 2
voice

ppp (half whispered)
Ratten

17 Scorrevole ♩ = 90 ca.

147
vlns. I
vlns. II
vlas.

*con sord.
unis. *ppp* sul pont.

* vlns. I, vlns. II and violas remain muted until the end of the symphony.

All rapid string passages are to be played on the string with separate bows, getting further towards the point as the pitch rises: e.g. the end of **17** + 2 is to be played at the point. Passages marked with staccato dots are to be played "quasi saltando" but in time.

fl. 1 2

cl. 1 2

hn. 1 2

150

vlns. I

vlns. II

vlas.

cl. 1 2

hn. 1 2

153

vlns. I

vlns. II

vlas.

cl. 1
cl. 2
bsn. 1
bsn. 2
hn. 1
hn. 2

Musical score for woodwinds. Clarinet parts (cl. 1, cl. 2) and Bassoon parts (bsn. 1, bsn. 2) are shown in the upper system. Horn parts (hn. 1, hn. 2) are in the lower system. The score includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *pp*.

vlns. I
vlns. II
vlas.
vlcs.

Musical score for strings. Violin I (vlns. I), Violin II (vlns. II), Viola (vlas.), and Violoncello (vlcs.) parts are shown. The score includes sixteenth-note patterns, slurs, and dynamic markings like *pp* and *sol. pont.*. A box labeled "[+ con. sord.]" is present, with a note: "* See note to Fig. 18".

Preview File Only

cl. 1
cl. 2
bsn. 1
bsn. 2

Musical score for woodwinds. Clarinet parts (cl. 1, cl. 2) and Bassoon parts (bsn. 1, bsn. 2) are shown. The score includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

desk 2
vlns. I
desk 3
desk 1
vlns. II
desks 2/3
vlas.
vlcs.

Musical score for strings. Violin I (vlns. I), Violin II (vlns. II), Viola (vlas.), and Violoncello (vlcs.) parts are shown. The score includes sixteenth-note patterns, slurs, and dynamic markings like *pp* and *sol. fasto*.

fl. 1, 2

ob. 1, 2

cl. 1, 2

bsn. 1, 2

Detailed description: This section of the score covers woodwind instruments. The flute part (fl.) has two staves with dynamics ranging from *p* to *f*. The oboe part (ob.) also has two staves with similar dynamics. The clarinet part (cl.) has two staves, with the second staff ending in the instruction *mf semplice*. The bassoon part (bsn.) has two staves with a more melodic line.

hn. 1, 2

Detailed description: The horn part (hn.) consists of two staves. The music features a melodic line with dynamics of *p* and *mf*.

voice

Und he schon pfeifend hier und dort Und ein

Detailed description: The vocal line is written on a single staff. The lyrics are "Und he schon pfeifend hier und dort Und ein". The dynamics are *mf*.

162

(pizz. if necessary for singer) pizz. *f*

arco sul tasto

pp subito

glin.

arco sul tasto

pp subito

sul tasto

sul tasto

vlas.

vics.

db.

PPP

PP

(contin.)

Detailed description: This section covers the string ensemble. It includes staves for Violins I (vlns. I), Violins II (vlns. II), Violas (vlas.), Violoncellos (vics.), and Double Basses (db.). The score includes various performance instructions such as *pizz.* (pizzicato), *arco sul tasto* (arco sul tasto), *pp subito*, *glin.* (glissando), and *PPP* (pianissimo). The double bass part includes the instruction *pont.* (ponticello).

25 *Lentissimo* ♩ 40 ca. senza vibrato!

fl. 1

(*fff*)

211

Lentissimo ♩ 40 ca.

vlns. I

div. in 2

nat. *ppp*

vlns. II

div. in 2

nat. *ppp*

==

fl. 1

pp dolcis.

215

voice

"EDGE" [Sylvia Plath] *P possibile*

The wo-man is per-fec-tad.

* change bow ad lib.

vlns. I

vlns. II

26

r breathe ad lib, imperceptibly

Musical score for woodwinds. The section includes:

- Flutes (fl.) 1 and 2: Playing a melodic line with a long note at the end.
- Oboes (ob.) 1 and 2: Playing a sustained note, marked *pp dolciss.*
- Clarinets (cl.) 1 and 2: Playing a melodic line, marked *pp dolciss.*
- Bassoon (bsn. 1): Playing a sustained note, marked *pp dolciss.*

219

Voice line with lyrics: "Her dead Bo - dy wears the smile of ac - com - plish - ment, The illo -". The melody features triplets and a long note.

26

Musical score for violins. The section includes:

- Violins I (vlns. I): Playing a sustained note.
- Violins II (vlns. II): Playing a sustained note.

breathe ad lib., imperceptibly.

fl. 1

ob. 1

ob. 2

cl. 1

cl. 2

bsn. 1

hn. 2

pp dolce

224

voice

— sion of a Greek — ne — ces — si — ty — Flows — in the scrolls — of her to — go, Her bare — feet —

vlins. I

vlins. II

Via. solo

pp non vibrato

fl. 1
2

ob. 1
2

cl. 1
2

bsn. 1

This section contains the woodwind parts for the first system. It includes staves for two flutes (fl. 1 & 2), two oboes (ob. 1 & 2), two clarinets (cl. 1 & 2), and one bassoon (bsn. 1). The music is primarily sustained notes with some melodic movement in the flutes and oboes.

hn. 1
2

open # (breathe ad lib., imperceptibly)

pp dolcis.

This section contains the horn parts for two horns (hn. 1 & 2). The music features a long, sustained note with a dynamic marking of *pp dolcis.* and a performance instruction: *open # (breathe ad lib., imperceptibly)*.

228

voice

pp

seem to be say- ing: — We have come so far — It is — a — ver.

This section contains the vocal line, starting at measure 228. The lyrics are: "seem to be say- ing: — We have come so far — It is — a — ver." The music is in a single line with a dynamic marking of *pp* at the end.

vlns. I
vlns. II

vlas.
[solo] [qi altri]

vles.
[solo] [qi altri]

db.

unis. pizz.

pp dolcis.

This section contains the string parts for the second system. It includes staves for Violins I (vlns. I), Violins II (vlns. II), two Violas (vlas. [solo] [qi altri]), two Violas (vles. [solo] [qi altri]), and Double Bass (db.). The music is mostly sustained notes with some pizzicato (pizz.) markings and a dynamic marking of *pp dolcis.* for the violas.

Preview File Only

IV. 33 Andante $\text{♩} = 72 \text{ ca.}$

fl. 2 ff dim pp

ob. 1 ff dim pp

cl. 1 ff dim pp

bsn. 1 pp cresc. mf dim. ppp

bsn. 2 pp cresc. mf dim. ppp

hn. 1 f dim pp

hn. 2 f dim pp

hn. 3 pp p pp

276

"AN DIE SCHWESTER" (Georg Trakl)

voice mf espr.
Wo du gehst wird

33 Andante $\text{♩} = 72 \text{ ca.}$

Vlins. I desk 1 arco mf pp

Vlins. I desk 2 pizz. mf sonoroso sempre

Vlins. I desk 3 arco mf pp

Vlins. II desk 1 arco p mf pp

Vlins. II desk 2 pizz. mf sonoroso sempre

Vlins. II desk 3 arco p mf pp

Vlas. desk 1 arco p mf pp

Vlas. desk 2 pizz. mf sonoroso sempre

Vlcs. desk 1 arco p mf pp

Vlcs. desk 2 pizz. mf sonoroso sempre

db. 1 arco f p mf sonoroso

db. 2 arco f p mf sonoroso

34

fl. 1, 2

ob. 1

cl. 1, 2

bsn. 1, 2

hn. 1, 2

284

voice

mf (aspr.)

Her — bst und A — bend, Blau — es Wild, — das un — ter Bäu — men tö

34

vlins. I desk 1, 2, 3

vlins. II desk 1, 2, 3

vlas. desk 1, 2

vlcs. desk 1, 2

db. 1, 2

mf, *arco*, *p*, *mf*, *pizz*, *f vib.*, *arco*

fl. { 1 2 }
ob. { 1 2 }
cl. { 1 2 }
bn. { 1 2 }

Woodwind section score for flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *mf*.

hn. { 1 2 }

Horn section score for horns 1 and 2. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*.

292

voice

n - t, Ein - sa - mer Wei - her am A - a

Vocal line with lyrics: "n - t, Ein - sa - mer Wei - her am A - a". The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*.

Vlns. I [deck 1, deck 2, deck 3]
Vlns. II [deck 1, deck 2, deck 3]
Vlas. [deck 1, deck 2]
Vics. [deck 1, deck 2]
db. { 1 2 }

String section score for Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Violas, and Double Basses. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *mf*, and *ppz*.