

*ICE SONG: FANTASY ON AN INUIT
POEM*

by

ANNA RUBIN

for

Soprano and Percussion

ICE SONG

I had been reading about the Inuit, shamanism among the Inuit and the powerful social commentary ESKIMOS, CHCANOS, INDIANS, VOLUME IV OF CHILDREN IN CRISIS by Robert Coles as I thought about writing a piece for singer Isabelle Ganz to perform at the MusicAlaskaWomen Festival in 1992. However, it was the specific poem below from an anthology of poetry by Jerome Rothenberg¹ which immediately ignited the piece. I often think about the woman described below and offer this piece in her honor.

HUNGER (excerpt) by Samik

Once during the winter famine
a woman gave birth to a child
while people lay round about her dying of hunger.
What could the baby want with life here on earth?
And how could it live when its mother herself
was dried up with starvation?
So she strangled it and let it freeze.
And later on ate it to keep alive -
Then a seal was caught and the famine was over,
so the mother survived.
But from that time on she was paralysed
because she had eaten a part of herself.

This is what can happen to people,
We have gone through it ourselves
And know what one may come to, so we do not judge them.
And how would anyone who has eaten his fill and is well
be able to understand the madness of hunger?
We only know that we all want so much to live!

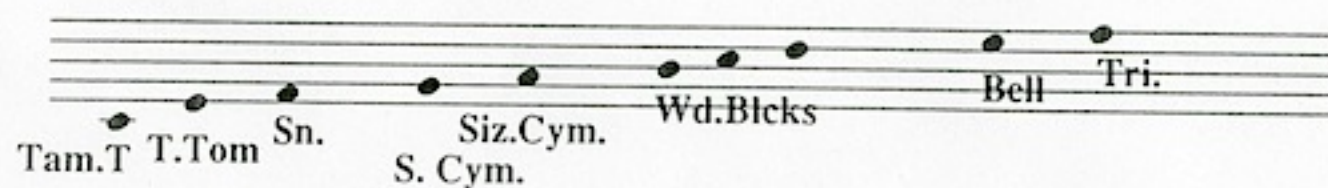
¹Jerome Rothenberg, SHAKING THE PUMPKIN: Traditional Poetry of the Indian North Americas, University of New Mexico Press, 1986.

ICE SONG

NOTES

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTATION

Triangle
Bell
Wood Blocks (3)
Small Cymbal
Sizzle Cymbal
Snare
Tom Tom
Tam Tam



Mysteriously with intensity

$\text{♩} = 60$

p restrained

Soprano

Percussion

Vibraphone

Measures 1-4 of the musical score. The Soprano part begins with a whole rest in measure 1, followed by a half note 'ai' in measure 2, and a half note 'ai' in measure 3. The Percussion part features a T-Tam in measure 1 with a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. In measure 2, it has a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. In measure 3, it has a half note 'p', a half note 'f', and a half note 'mp'. In measure 4, it has a half note 'p', a half note 'f', and a half note 'mp'. The Vibraphone part has whole rests in measures 1, 2, and 3, and a whole rest in measure 4. The tempo is marked $\text{♩} = 60$ and the mood is 'Mysteriously with intensity'. The Soprano part is marked *p* restrained.

S.

Perc.

Vibes

5

Measures 5-8 of the musical score. The Soprano part begins with a half note 'ai' in measure 5, followed by a half note 'ai' in measure 6, a half note 'ai' in measure 7, and a half note 'ai' in measure 8. The Percussion part features a T-Tam in measure 5 with a half note 'mp'. In measure 6, it has a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. In measure 7, it has a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. In measure 8, it has a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. The Vibraphone part has whole rests in measures 5, 6, 7, and 8. The Soprano part is marked *p* restrained.

S.

Perc.

Vibes

10

Measures 9-12 of the musical score. The Soprano part begins with a half note 'bare' in measure 9, followed by a half note 'ly' in measure 10, a half note 'wo' in measure 11, and a half note 'man' in measure 12. The Percussion part features a T-Tam in measure 9 with a half note 'mp'. In measure 10, it has a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. In measure 11, it has a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. In measure 12, it has a half note 'p' and a half note 'f'. The Vibraphone part has whole rests in measures 9, 10, 11, and 12. The Soprano part is marked *p* restrained.

S. *mf* 5 3 15
 does it touch my face (s) Life froze in my veins I am lost

Perc. poco T-Tam S. Cym. Siz. Cym. T-Tam. l.v.

Vibes *p* *mf* *mf*

S. *mf* *piu mosso* more expressively 3
 in win ter ai It is time to go to the dark

Perc. T-Tom Tri. l.v.

Vibes *tr* *mf* *mf*

20 S.
 shin ing one who lives be- neath the wat-ers be-neath the ice dark moth-

Perc. S. Cym. T-Tam

Vibes *tr* *Crot.* *l.v.* *l.v.*

S. 25 *3*

-er she ate the fin - gers of her moth - er They be - came fish ot - ter seal and

Perc.

Vibes

mf *2nd*

S. 30 *5* *3*

whale It is time to go to her and cleans any - self, she must hear my stor y or when I die I will

Perc. T.Tom *mp* Tri. *f* *mp*

Vibes *f* *1.v.* *mf* *2nd*

S. 35

go to the of misery. *f* *mf* O wise one, who sees

Perc. S.Cym. Tri. freely, all non-pitched instruments Blcks. T.Tom Sn.d. T.Tom

Vibes *p* *f*

S. vi - sions see me, one who hears voi - ces hear me one who trem bles

Perc. T.Tom Sn.

Vibes

40 S. melt my ice heal me i i etc. sim. You bring me to your ho - ly place, you

Perc. l.v. bell

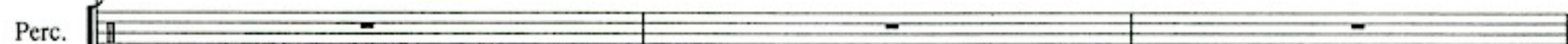
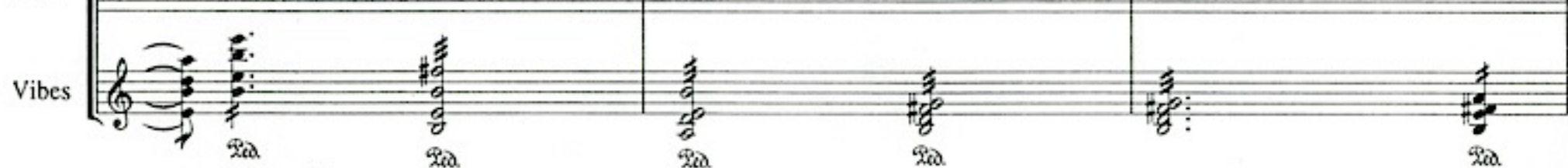
Vibes *mp* *f* *mp*

45 S. cov - er me in fine furs furs of ot - ter ot - ter and seal, ot - ter and seal. I be - gin to feel strength

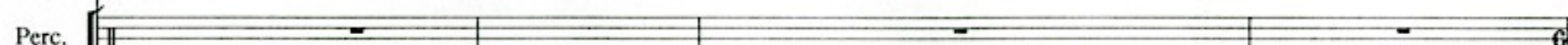
Perc.

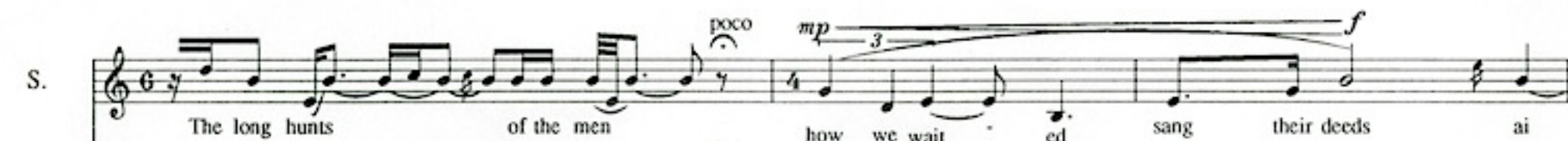
Vibes *f* *mp*

S. 
and you sing sing to me I re-mem-ber days of song

Perc. 
Vibes 

S. 
mmm nights of love

Perc. 
Vibes 

S. 
The long hunts of the men how we wait ed sang their deeds ai

Perc. 
Vibes 

S. *f* ⁶⁰ *ullulate* *joyously* *mf* ³ ³

feel this new strength wise one of the ot-ter and seal

Perc. T-Tom Snare

Vibes *mp* T-Tam

S. ⁶ ⁶⁵ ³

Oh, I re- mem- ber that good win- ter much to eat and share, the warm

Perc. *legato*

Vibes *mf* ³ ³ ³

S. ³ ³

days the geese wore new fea- thers the days lit with sun

Perc.

Vibes ³ ⁴ ³ ⁶ ⁵ ³

The musical score is arranged in three systems, each with a vocal line (S.) and two instrumental lines (Perc. and Vibes). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4.

System 1: The vocal line begins at measure 70 with the lyrics "and I was with my be-lov-ed. We made much joy". It features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a sixteenth-note triplet. The instrumental parts provide a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

System 2: The vocal line continues with the lyrics "and I was round round with child". It includes a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a final measure with a half note. The instrumental parts continue with a similar rhythmic pattern.

System 3: The vocal line concludes with the lyrics "and we sang to wel come a new soul come to us and I was round 5". It features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet. The instrumental parts provide a final accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

80 *Ren. trill*

mp

and the sea - son turned to cold, cold, ai

Sus. Cym. *Sn.* *p*

85

the men could find no food

I grew no round - er no round - er

ullulate

88

the men left to hunt they left the wo-men the young the old,

mf pp $\leftarrow$ *mf* *T.Tom p* *Siz. Cym.* *Siz. Cym.*

91

they trav - eled far for food. I gave birth. She was ver - y lit - tle her

pp Tri.

p *And.*

96

cry was so soft I was so hung - ry hung - ry ai I did not want to die ai

mf 3

Crotale

mp

f *p*

p

102

Oh, dark one help me to tell my sto - ry. I was hold - ing the lit - tle one I

ff *sub.* *pp* *mp* *piu mosso*

ff *lv.* *T.Tam* *p* *lv.*

p *And.* 9 *And.* *And.*

106

had no milk. Next day, no milk and the next and the next and the next day no milk I was mad with

Sn. T.Tom

f *3* *angushed* *f* *3* *f* *mp* *f* *mp*

110

hun-ger hun-ger hun-ger I could not bear to watch her die I strang-led her. I

etc. sim. *pp* *ppp* *p*

115

wait-ed wait-ed prayed for food, they did not come back. Begging the child's fore-give-ness

Bell

p

Crot.

121

mp

I ate her, ai I sur vived till the men came back.

Crot. *l.v.* Vibe. *pp*

3

126

No one blamed me, but I stopped sing - ing, then work - ing, lov - ing, bare - ly wo - man, ice cold

T.Tom *p* Tam.T. *l.v.* Wd.Blecks *l.v.*

3 3

130

tenderly and with joy

wo - man. But now I feel my tears so hot the snow cold on my cheeks. I feel my lit - tle one

p *mf*

Red. appropriately to end

3 3

134

blood of my blood, bone of my bone, she sings to me. Mother do not weep

bell

139

for me I swim with the otter, I soar with the clouds

143

and the wind and stars

148 *mf* *pp*

mmm ...

Bell *p*

mp 6 6 6 *pp*

The musical score for measures 148-150 features three staves. The top staff, in treble clef, begins with a vocal line marked *mf* and a melisma 'mmm ...' that extends across the first two measures. The third measure contains a single note marked *pp*. The middle staff, in alto clef, shows a bell part with a single note in the third measure marked *p* and labeled 'Bell'. The bottom staff, in treble clef, contains a piano line with triplet sixteenth notes in measures 148 and 149, marked *mp*, and a final note in measure 150 marked *pp*.