

Anna Rubín

SO MANY OCEANS

for

soprano and piano

Poem

by

Nelly Sachs

(in English translation by the composer)

So Many Oceans

Nobel Laureate Nelly Sachs wrote many haunting poems documenting the inner turmoil she experienced during and after the Holocaust. She lived in Germany until 1940 when she fled to Sweden and there spent the rest of her life. Reading these poems more than fifty years after they were written, I see also in her nature imagery, a lament not only for the Jewish people, but for the earth and its creatures. The English translations are my own. The third poem includes some of her German text.

So Many Oceans

So many oceans vanished in sand
So many grains of sand prayed themselves into stone.
So many sobs were buried in the music of seashells.
So many dead abandoned in pearl eyes of fish.
So many patterns of stars in shining crystal.
So many pearls of laughter sing in the sea gull's throat.
So many threads of longing travel the stars of the vaulted night sky.
So much fertile earth shrouding the root of the word,
You -
Behind the veil of secrets,
You.

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Notes on Performance

p

6

6

The

Repeat figure for duration indicated by heavy horizontal line.



wind,

Gliss upwards briefly

So Many Oceans

Musical score for "The Great Wall" by John Williams, measures 1-4. The score is in 4/4 time, marked "ca. 82". It features a piano (p) and mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The right hand plays a melodic line with a "loco" marking and a triplet. The left hand plays a bass line with a triplet and a "Ped." marking. A "8vb" marking is also present.

3

Ped. *mf*

5

6

7

8^{vb}

p

Ped.

Ped. *Ped.*

Musical score for measures 8-9. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex texture with multiple staves, including a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. The vocal line has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The piano part has a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The piano part also includes a pedal point marked *Ped.* and a bass line with a dynamic marking of *8^{vb}* (very bass).

Musical score for measures 10-11. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The piano part features a complex texture with multiple staves, including a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. The piano part has a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The piano part also includes a pedal point marked *Ped.* and a bass line with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Musical score for measures 12-13. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The piano part features a complex texture with multiple staves, including a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. The piano part has a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano). The piano part also includes a pedal point marked *Ped.* and a bass line with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte).

poco rall.

12 *mf* *gliss.* *mp* 3

o - - - - ceans, So man - y

Ped. _____ ^

13 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$ *f* ceans

Ped. _____ ^ Ped. _____ ^ Ped. _____ ^ Ped. _____ ^

14 3 *mp* *mf* *gliss.* 3

van-ished in sand, sand,

Ped. _____ ^ Ped. _____ ^ Ped. _____ ^

16 *p*

mp

Ped. _____ ^

18 *mp* 3 *f* *gliss.*

How man-y grains of sand,

mf *p*

20 *mf* 3 3 3

prayed them - selves prayed them - selves in - to

mp

8^{va} _____

Ped. _____ ^

22

stone, stone,

Ped. _____

Detailed description: This system contains measures 22 and 24. The vocal line in measure 22 has the lyrics "stone, stone," with a long note. The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Measure 24 is mostly empty for the vocal line. Pedal points are indicated by a line with a wedge at the end.

24

mp *p*

Ped. _____ Ped. _____

Detailed description: This system contains measures 24 and 26. The piano part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 24 and a triplet of sixteenth notes in measure 26. Dynamics *mp* and *p* are marked. Pedal points are indicated by a line with a wedge at the end.

26

mp *p* *gliss.*

So man-y sobs _____ were

Ped. _____ Ped. _____

Detailed description: This system contains measures 26 and 28. The vocal line in measure 26 has the lyrics "So man-y sobs" and "were". The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes and a sixteenth-note glissando. Dynamics *mp*, *p*, and *gliss.* are marked. Pedal points are indicated by a line with a wedge at the end.

28

pp

bur-ied in the mu-sic of sea - - shells, sea -

Ped. _____ Ped. _____ Ped. _____ Ped. _____ Ped. _____

Detailed description: This system contains measures 28 and 30. The vocal line in measure 28 has the lyrics "bur-ied in the mu-sic of sea - - shells, sea -". The piano part features a triplet of eighth notes and a sixteenth-note glissando. Dynamics *pp* are marked. Pedal points are indicated by a line with a wedge at the end.

31

shells.

mf *mp* *f*

Red. Λ Red.

34

mf 3 3 3 3

So man-y dead, — so man-y dead,

pp 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

37

3 a-ban - doned, a - ban - doned, in pearl — eyes in pearl — eyes of fish. —

mf 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Musical score for measures 40-41. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features complex textures with triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Pedal points are indicated at the bottom of the piano part.

Measures 40-41. The piano part features complex textures with triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Pedal points are indicated at the bottom of the piano part.

Musical score for measures 42-43. The vocal line includes the lyrics "So man y pat - terns of stars". The piano accompaniment continues with intricate sixteenth-note patterns. Pedal points are marked at the bottom.

Measures 42-43. The vocal line includes the lyrics "So man y pat - terns of stars". The piano accompaniment continues with intricate sixteenth-note patterns. Pedal points are marked at the bottom.

Musical score for measures 44-45. The vocal line includes the lyrics "pat - terns of stars in shin - ing". The piano accompaniment features a dense texture of chords and moving lines. Pedal points are indicated at the bottom.

Measures 44-45. The vocal line includes the lyrics "pat - terns of stars in shin - ing". The piano accompaniment features a dense texture of chords and moving lines. Pedal points are indicated at the bottom.

46 *gliss.*

cry - - stal.

47

48 **poco rall.**

mp

49

49 - - *mf*

So man y pearls of laugh-ter sing sing in thesea gull's

mp

50

51 *poco accel.*

throat _____ So man-y threads

mf

53 *f*

_____ of long-ing for home, for home, _____

mp *mf*

56

trav - el the stars _____

57

of the vault - ed night sky.

Ped. Ped. Ped.

58

Ped. Ped.

59

Ped. Ped. Ped.

61 *mf*

So much fer-tile earth shroud-ing the root, _____ shroud-ing the

mp 6

Ped. _____

8^{vb} Ped. _____ Ped. _____

63 *f*

root _____ of the word, _____ of the word, _____ shroud-ing the root _____

f 3

(pedal individual chords)

8^{vb} Ped. _____ Ped. _____ Ped. _____

66 *ff*

of You! You, _____ *p*

f 3 7

8^{vb}

69

You

p 6 5 3 3 5

(8).....

71 *f* *mp* poco rit. *p*

You,

f *pp*

una corda

Ped. (pedal individual chords)

73 *mp*

You.

mp *p* 5

76 *mp*

Be - hind the veil _____ of sec - rets, _____

mf

8^{vb}

Ped. _____

78

Ped. _____ Ped. _____ Ped. _____

80 *poco accel.*

Ped. _____ Ped. _____

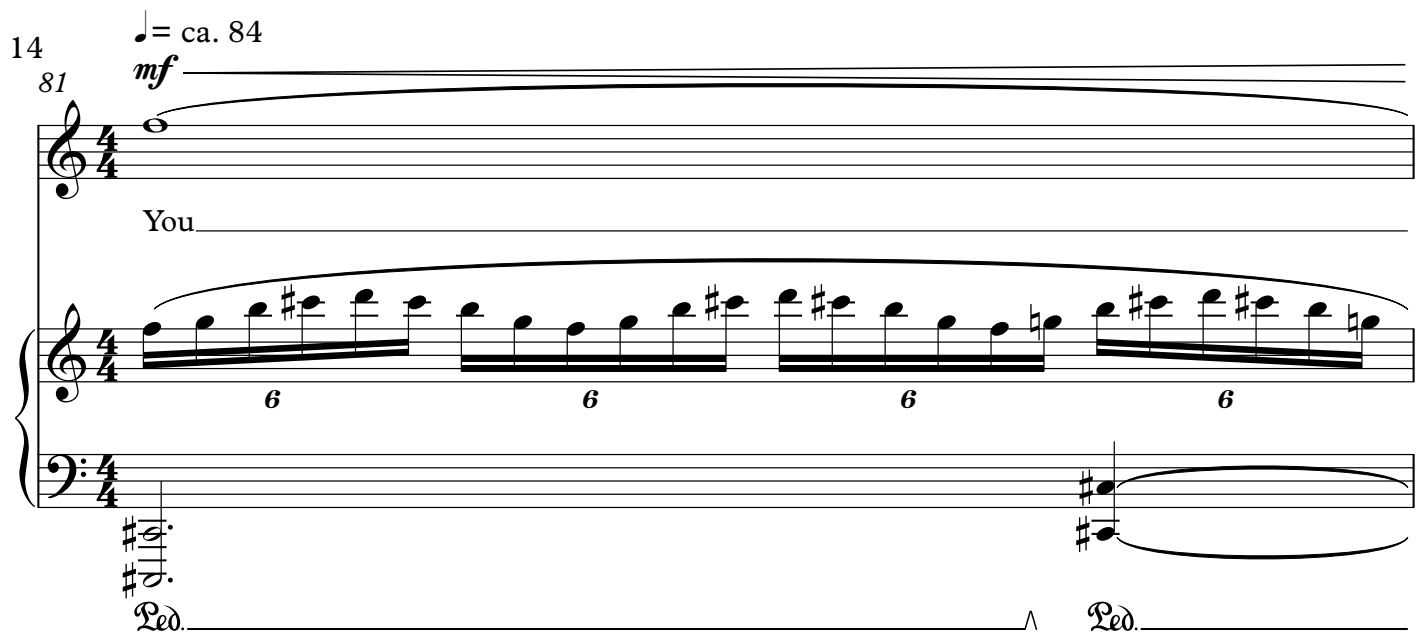
14 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 84$

81 *mf*

You.

6 6 6 6

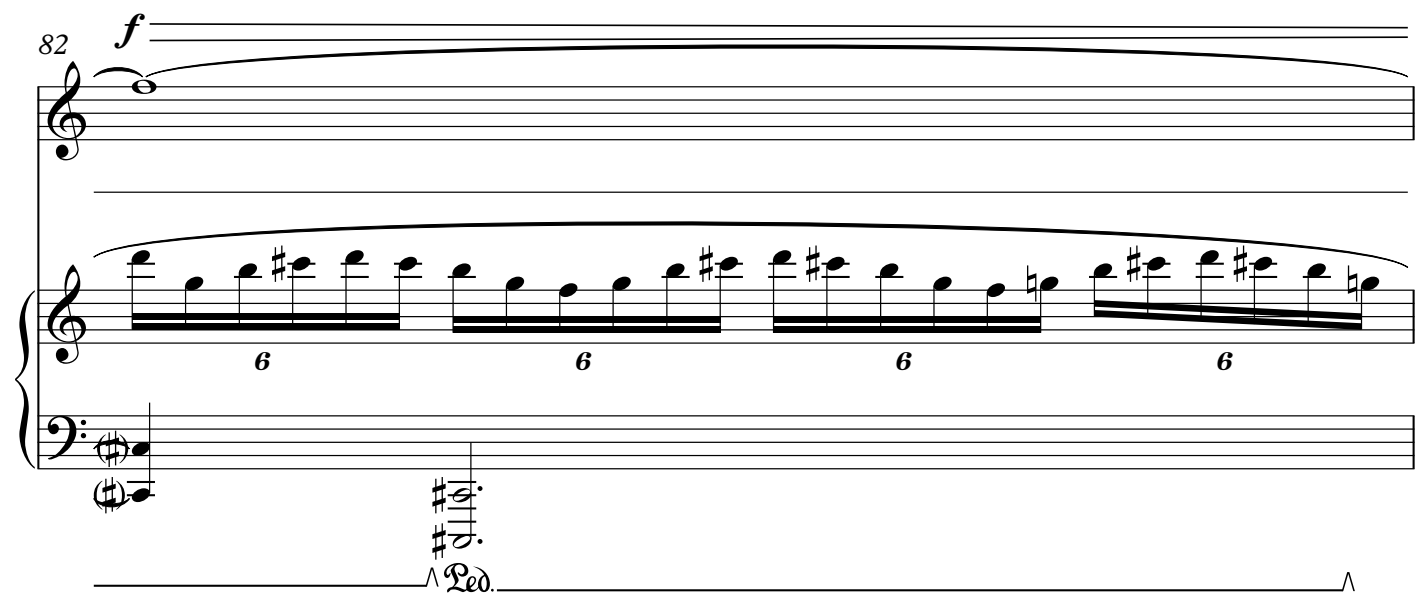
Ped. Ped.



82 *f*

6 6 6 6

Ped.

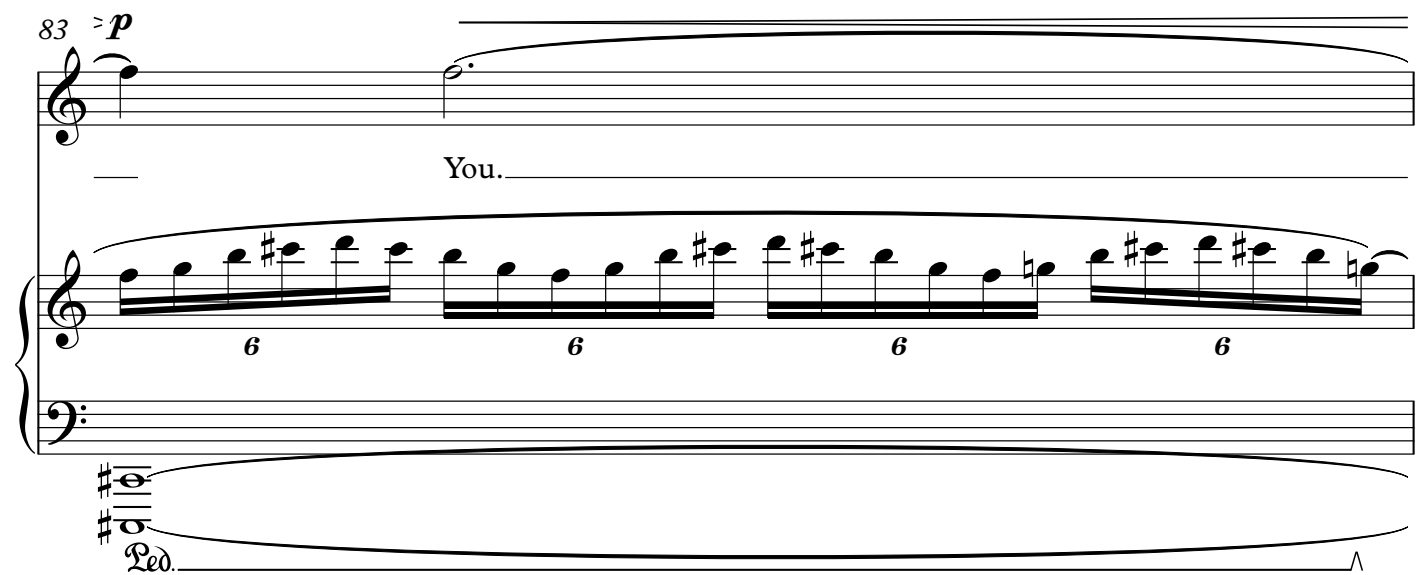


83 *>p*

You.

6 6 6 6

Ped.



84 *ff* Cut off together

ff

ff

Ped.