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Zachary Bell

Zachary Bell Music – ASCAP

Tie Me to the Mast

Duration: 5 minutes

Instrumentation: SSAA (at least two of each part), piano

I. Aphrodite

II. Siren

III. Undying Hearth

Program Notes:

Tie Me to the Mast is a 5 minute work in three movements for treble choir and piano. The piece was written for the Peabody Camerata under the direction of Beth Willer and was recorded by the ensemble in 2023.

In Movement 1 I set the text of Ovid, which brings forth the idea of Venus' touch affecting all. Although she does not inspire love out of kindness, she does not do so out of malevolence either. It is not in our control when or how we might experience love, but it is a remarkable and integral part of life. Regardless of the outcome, love is something worth experiencing.

In Movement 2 I set my original poem, "Siren," which expresses my experience of falling for someone despite the inclination that they are not interested in a relationship with me. I pursued closure, which came in the form of rejection, as I felt unable to deal with ambivalency. I draw a comparison between this and the sirens in Homer's *The Odyssey*. Despite the resulting pain, it was irresistible for me to pursue the potential relationship to its end. Thus, just as Odysseus asked of his sailors, I ask to be "tied to the mast" to avoid swimming to my death.

In Movement 3 I set more original text–this time based on my experience with my current girlfriend. In this relationship, I feel a sense of peace, security, and warmth. Time seems to pass by more slowly when I'm with her, and being in her presence is like sitting next to a fire that does not dwindle–an undying hearth.

Text:

I. "Aphrodite" by Ovid

Even the sun whose light rules all the stars has known love's kingdom.

The mistress of love is not kind she is not malevolent either.

Even the toughest of warriors have known the touch of Venus

through the outreach of her pink light that shines between us.

II. "Siren" by Zachary Bell

I am a helpless sailor at sea When I hear your sweet voice And row towards you My oar pushing against the water My strength is faltering

You call for me And I think that this may be the time That you're not a siren and I am not a helpless sailor

My heart fills with hope As I walk onto shore But even as I trod through the thick gray sand Doubt begins to fill my mind

I am helpless
I cannot leave and regret rowing away from you
So I offer my heart to do with as you will
And as you eat it
I am relieved

III. "Undying Hearth" by Zachary Bell

Like an imperceptibly fading sunset, the time I spend with you is frozen. Being with you, I feel at peace. I give love, and I receive it.

Holding you in my arms is sitting by the fireplace. Holding you in my arms is tender warmth spreading through me.

Performance Notes:

- Accidentals carry through the measure unless interrupted by another accidental, but courtesy accidentals are provided throughout.
- A tenuto mark indicates that the note should be given more weight, but should not be emphasized as much as notes with accent marks.
- A "7" in place of or attached to an accidental indicates that the pitch is the 7th partial of a harmonic series, and should be lowered by approximately 1/3rd of a semitone. This carries through the measure, just as accidentals do.

I'm especially grateful to Dr. Beth Willer, Prof. Michael Hersch, and Dr. Sky Macklay for their time, advice, and support.

Tie Me to the Mast

for the Peabody Camerata

Zachary Bell

I. Aphrodite





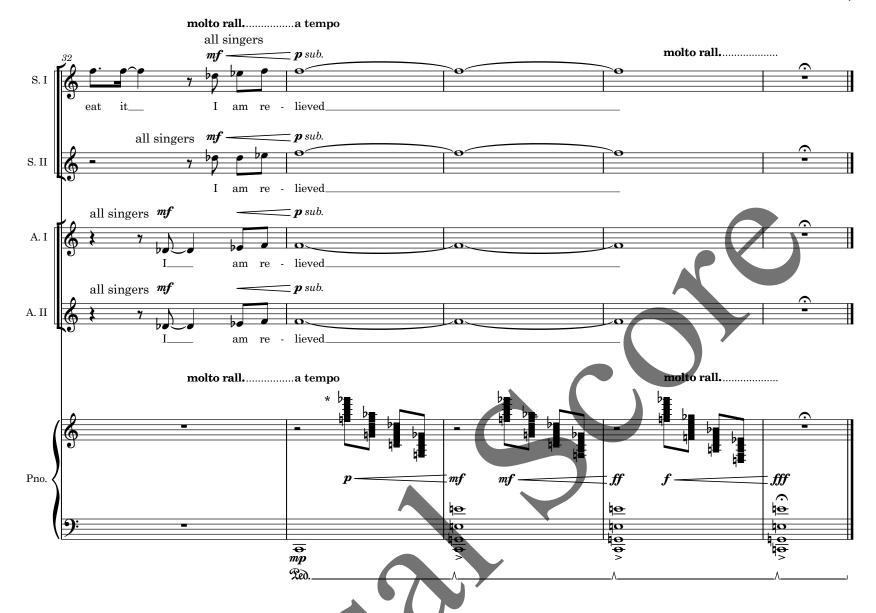
2. Siren











* chromatic cluster chords can be played with the palm of the LH on the white keys and palm of the RH on the black keys. Register may be approximated

3. Undying Hearth















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