

IN PROFUNDUM MARIS
Nance

SSAATTBB, accompanied

WW1957

IN PROFUNDUM MARIS

RICHARD NANCE composer
KATHRYN I.W. SPARKS lyricist

RICHARD NANCE CHORAL SERIES

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W
WALTON

About the Work

This work was composed in 2019 for Richard Sparks on the occasion of his retirement from the choral faculty and music administration at the University of North Texas. Dr. Sparks was my choral colleague at Pacific Lutheran University from 1992-2001, and we are very close friends. The text is by his wife Kathryn, who served on the art faculty at PLU for many years, and is a well-known artist, writer, and author. Though titled in Latin—*In Profundum Maris* ("In the Depths of the Sea")—the poem is in English. About the poem, Kathryn writes:

The heart of this text simply reflects a sense that no matter how far down I think I may have fallen, even beyond what's knowable, if I let myself be still enough to hear the melody of the universe it can rescue and revive me. Music has healing—perhaps even saving—power. The closing line can mean either that music is eternal, too miraculous to have an end itself, or that I won't easily let go of life as long as the mysterious beauty of music still reaches me.

The piano accompaniment and the use of triplet figures throughout paints the image of rolling waves. Deep descents in the vocal lines, rising lines that end in dissonant chords, a brief passage of calming unison (on the word, peace), and a turn to a brilliant major triad with added tones on the word miracles are all examples of word painting that bring out the extreme emotions of the text.

-Richard Nance

In Profundum Maris

Deep in the ocean, fathoms far,
Beyond the reach of the brightest star,
In the abyss of the secret sea
(Seemingly past where life could be
Sustained) lies a billowing bed of kelp
That waves in the dark, where sleep, where help,
Where the mystical marvel of music calls.
As the tides turn back and the current falls,
As the storms above relent, abate,
Becalm, bring peace, it is not too late.
Mercy and hope ripple through the green
Sea forest, inscrutable and unseen—
Redemption hazy and far away—
Until, like dawn of blessed Day,
Miracles, beautiful dreams, immense,
Suffuse the soul in every sense,
Resound to the rush as the seas roll by:
Too lovely is melody to die...

-Kathryn I.W. Sparks

About the Composer

Richard Nance spent a 30-year career at Pacific Lutheran University (1992-2022), where he conducted the Choir of the West, University Singers and Choral Union. Nance's choirs have performed at two ACDA National Conferences, six ACDA Division Conferences, the 2011 Harmonie Festival in Lindenhofshausen, Germany (two gold awards and one silver), the 2014 Florence International Choral Festival (winner in two categories and for outstanding conductor), the 2015 Anton Bruckner Choral Competition in Linz, Austria (winner in two categories and the Anton Bruckner award), and at the 2015 National Collegiate Choral Organization Conference. Nance received the 2011 and 2013 "American Prize" for Choral Conducting, and the 2013-2014 Faculty Excellence Award for Research at PLU. He has served ACDA as Washington state and Northwestern Division president, and received leadership and service awards from both organizations. Nance's choral works are published by Walton Music, Hinshaw Music and Colla Voce Music. He composed the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Commission (2002) for the American Choral Directors Association.

Duration: Approx. 4:30

In Profundum Maris

SSAATTBB and Piano

Text by
KATHRYN I.W. SPARKS (b. 1960)

Music by
RICHARD NANCE (b. 1955)

Adagio (♩ = 66) *misterioso*

Piano

mp

5 *mp misterioso*

S Deep in the o - cean _____ fath - oms far, Be-yond the reach _____ of the

mp misterioso

S Deep in the o - cean _____ fath - oms far, Be-yond the reach _____ of the

mp misterioso

A Deep in the o - cean, _____ fath - oms far, Be-yond the reach _____ of the

mp misterioso

A Deep in the o - cean, _____ fath - oms far, Be-yond the reach _____ of the

sim.

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8

bright - est star, In* (mm)

bright - est star, In the* (mm)

bright - est star, In the ah* (mm)

bright - est star, In the a - bih* (mm)

bright - est star, In the a - bih* (mm)

bright - est star, In the a - byss of* (mm)

bright - est star, In the a - byss of the se-cret sea.

p

11

S

A

T

B

mp

Deep in the o-cean, —

mp

Deep in the o-cean, fath - oms far,

mp

*close to mm ad lib

15

deep in the o-cean, (Seem-ing - ly past where
Be-yond the reach of the bright - est star, (Seem-ing - ly past where

The musical score for measures 15-17 features a vocal melody in the upper voice and a piano accompaniment in the lower voice. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The vocal melody includes triplet markings and a crescendo leading to the end of the phrase. The piano accompaniment also includes triplet markings and a crescendo.

18

a bil-low-ing bed of
lies a bil-low-ing bed of kelp, a
life could be Sus-tained)

The musical score for measures 18-20 continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The key signature remains one flat. The vocal melody includes triplet markings and a crescendo. The piano accompaniment also includes triplet markings and a crescendo. The phrase "life could be Sus-tained)" is repeated in both the vocal and piano parts.

20

kelp, a bil-low-ing bed_ of kelp, a bil-low-ing bed_ of
 bil-low-ing bed_ of kelp, a bil-low-ing bed_ of kelp, a
mp gently undulating

That waves _____ in the
mp gently undulating

That waves _____ in the

mp *mp* *mp* *sim.*

22

kelp, a bil-low-ing bed_ of kelp, where sleep, where help, where sleep, where
 bil-low-ing bed_ of kelp, where sleep, where
 dark, where sleep where
 dark, where sleep, where

24 *f*

help, The mys - ti - cal mar - vel of mu - sic

help, The mys - ti - cal mar - vel of mu - sic

help, The mys - ti - cal mar - vel of mu - sic

help, The mys - ti - cal mar - vel of mu - sic

f marcato

appassionato

27 *mf*

calls. As the tides turn back and the cur - rent falls, As the

calls. As the tides turn back and the cur - rent falls, As the

calls. As the tides turn back and the cur - rent falls,

calls. As the tides turn back and the cur - rent falls,

mf

30

storms a - bove re - lent, a - bate, Be - calm, — bring peace... it is not ³ too late, Be -

storms a - bove re - lent, a - bate, Be - calm, — bring peace it is not — too late. Be -

Be -

Be -

mf

32

calm, — bring peace... — it is not ³ too late. The mys - ti - cal

calm, — bring peace... — it is not — too late. The mys - ti - cal

calm, ³ bring peace... — it is not ³ too late. The mys - ti - cal

calm, — bring peace... it is not ³ too late. The mys - ti - cal

f

f

f

f

34

mar-vel of mu - sic calls. As the tides turn back and the

mar-vel of mu - sic calls. As the tides turn back and the

mar-vel of mu - sic calls, As the tides turn back and the

mar-vel of mu - sic calls, As the tides turn back and the

37

cur-rent falls, the cur-rent falls, the ebb - ing

cur-rent falls, the cur-rent falls, the ebb - ing

cur-rent falls, the cur-rent falls, the ebb - ing cur - rent

cur-rent falls, the cur-rent falls, the ebb - ing cur - rent

40 *p*

cur - rent falls.

p

cur - rent falls.

p

falls.

p

falls.

mp

3

43 *pp*

Peace,

pp

Peace,

pp

Peace,

pp

3

46 *p* *mp* *molto cresc.*

peace, peace, Oh, Ah,

peace, peace, Oh, Ah,

peace, peace, Oh, Ah,

Peace, Oh, Ah,

p *mp* *molto cresc.*

p *mp* *molto cresc.*

49 *f*

The mar - vel of mu - sic calls. Ah,

The mar - vel of mu - sic calls. Ah,

Ah,

Ah,

f

f

f

52

beau - ti - ful mu - sic, Mer - cy and hope rip - ple through the green Sea

beau - ti - ful mu - sic, Mer - cy and hope rip - ple through the green Sea

mf

mp

54

Re - demp - tion ha - zy and far__ a - way... Un -

Re - demp - tion ha - zy and far__ a - way... Un -

for - est, in - scru - ta - ble, and un - seen...

mf

mp

60

fuse the soul in ev' - ry sense... Re -

fuse the soul in ev' - ry sense... Re -

fuse the soul in ev' - ry sense... Re -

fuse the soul in ev' - ry sense... Re -

62

sound to the rush as the seas roll by: Too love - ly is
love - ly

sound to the rush as the seas roll by: Too love - ly is
love - ly

sound to the rush as the seas roll by: Too love - ly is
love - ly

sound to the rush as the seas roll by: Too love - ly is

appassionato

65 *mp* *mf* *mp*

mel-o-dy — to die... Mys-ti-cal mu-sic calls. The

die... Mys-ti-cal mu-sic calls. The

mel - o - dy to die... *mp*

mel - o - dy Mu - sic calls. *mp*

69 *mf* *molto rit.* *mp*

mar-vel of mu-sic, beau-ti-ful mu-sic calls. *mp*

mar-vel of mu-sic, beau-ti-ful mu-sic calls. *mp*

mu - sic calls.

mu - sic calls.

Mu - sic, mu - sic calls.

mf *mp* RH