

Creatures in Place

for

Soprano & Piano

John Newell

ABIERTO MUSIC

Boulder

Sidney Wade

John Newell

$\text{♩} = 76$

p

this world is full of beau-ti-ful sur-

p

ped.

II

ped.

3

pris - - - es. _____ here's one: one bright blue

mp

ped.

II

*

5

noon on Loon Lake I sat on the porch eat - ing

With pedal

7 $\text{♩} = 84$

lunch and watched a chip - munk on the

9 *poco ritard.*

com - post pile nib - ble a strand of spa - ghet - ti un - til he'd con -

12 $\text{♩} = 84$ *f*

sumed it all and then I heard a tre - men - dous flus - ter on the

15 *mp* $\text{♩} = 69$ *ff* *p*

lake a moose had qui - et - ly been

9 15

Leo.

*

17

munch - ing on un - der - wat - er plants fine de-li-ca-cies _____ to

19

3 *ritard.* ♩ = 66

north - ern ru - mi - nate types and what I had tak - en to be a

22

f

boul - der turned out to have been a shoul - der _____ as her sub - merged mouth hoo - vered up

25

♩ = 78 - 80

all the jui - cy stems of my wa - ter li - lies un - til her

27

hun - gry lungs ached for air and she reared her head in a great

29

splen - dor of bright wa - ter a slash - ing slurp - ing slur - ry of

32

mud and stems pro - fuse and drip - ping from her stream - ing

34

ritard. $\text{♩} = 63$ *mp* *poco ritard.*

maw _____ as she ob - served me cool - ly _____ be -

37 $\text{♩} = 56$

fore head - ing down for more

Leo. *

12-1-22

Gulls In the Wind

Betsy Sholl

John Newell

$\text{♩} = 72$ in a somewhat refined rap style

mf

Gulls In the Wind

3

Gulls In the Wind

5

Be-drag-gled fea - thers like bon-nets that would fly off if they weren't strapped,

7

ka - zoo voiced, a cho - rus of cry - ing dol - phins or rus - ty si -

9

rens a speck of dust could set off these rau - cous glean - ers mill - ing a - round,

11

mill - ing a - round pick up and dis - card, now — a Q - tip, now

13

— a shred of let - tuce or cel - lo - phane, a ci - ga - rette butt one

15

holds a se-cond as if he real-ly might smoke. One drags an

17

old con - dom, one spots a good crumb and walk - runs, squawks

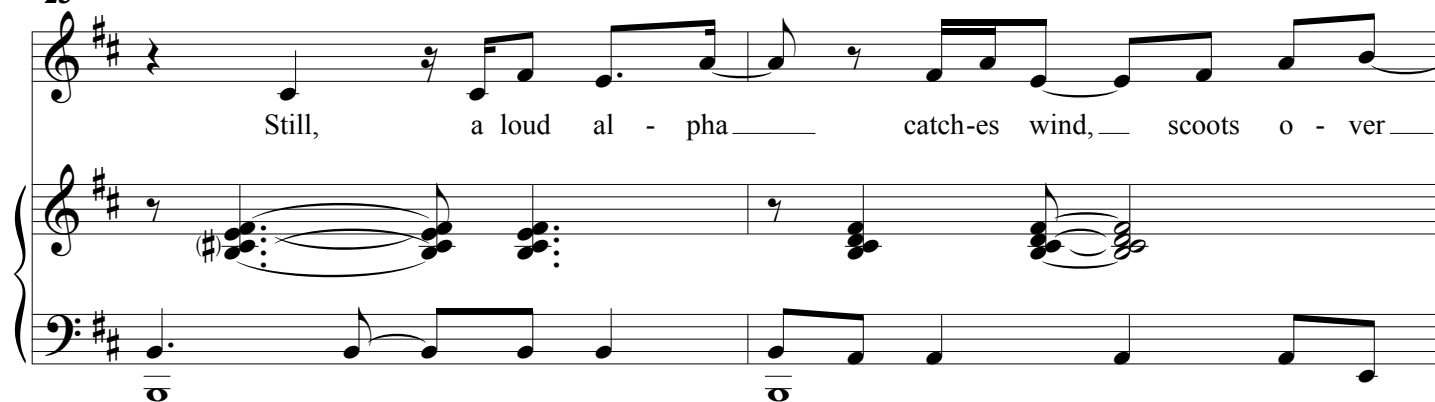
19

ev - ry-one else a - way. But it's just a dried scrap of weed he'll toss

21

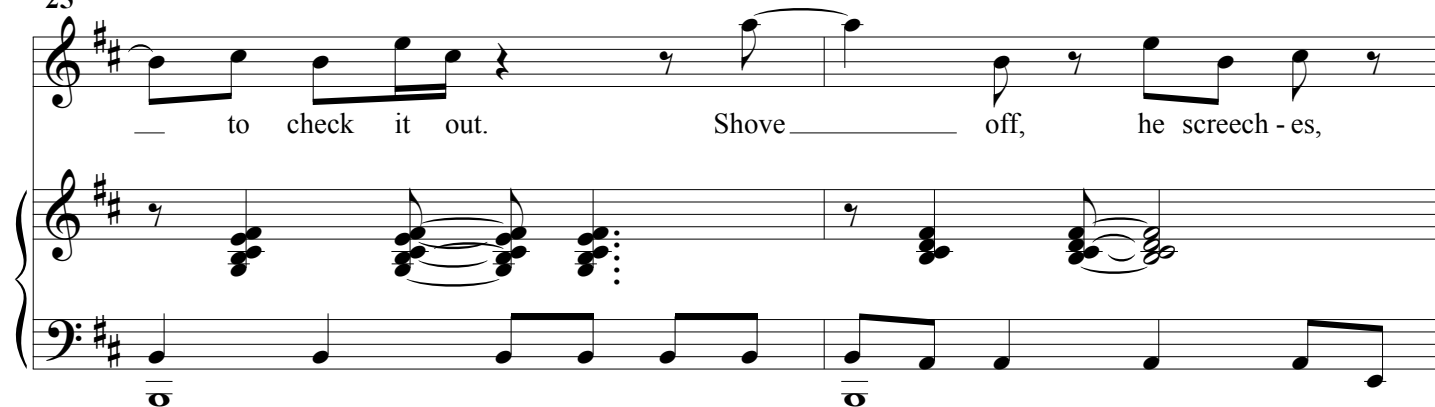
back, grist for the next fool's ex - pect - ta - tion.

23



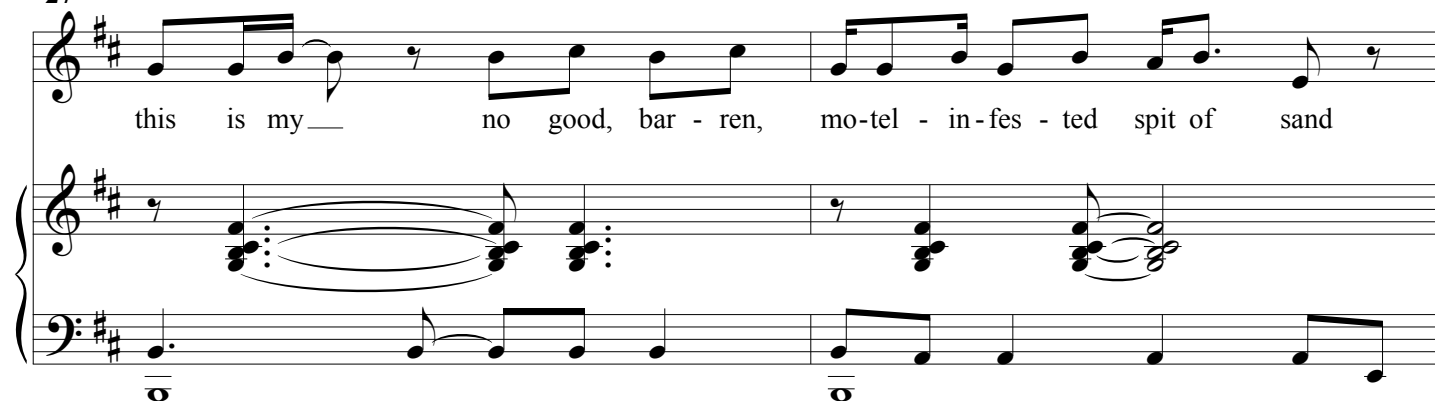
Still, a loud al - pha _____ catch-es wind, _____ scoots o - ver _____

25



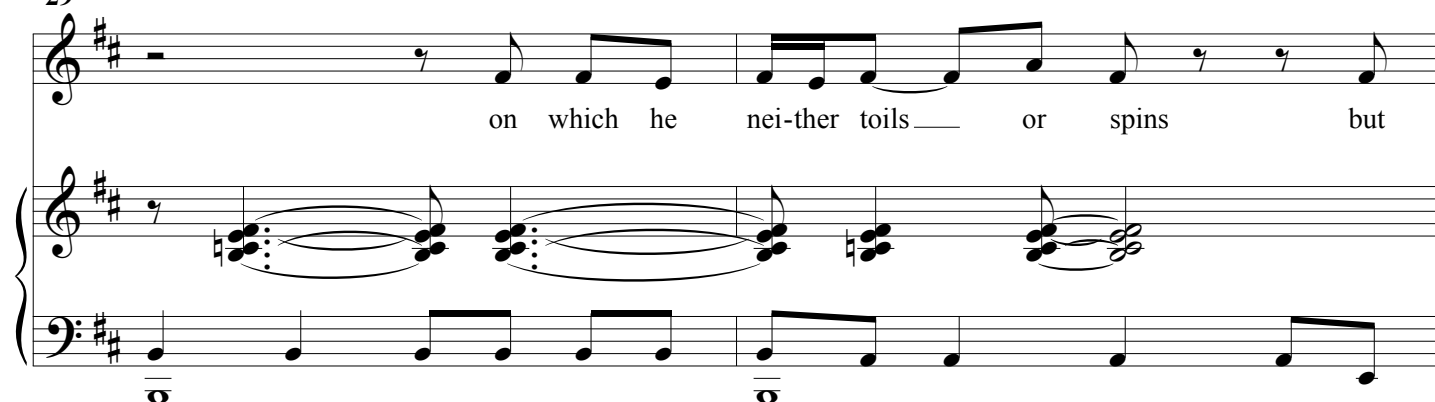
_____ to check it out. _____ Shove _____ off, _____ he screech - es, _____

27



this is my _____ no good, bar - ren, _____ mo-tel - in-fes - ted spit of sand _____

29



_____ on which he _____ nei-ther toils _____ or spins _____ but _____

31

grubs all day on webbed feet and cle-ver back - hinged knees,

This system contains measures 31 and 32. The vocal line in measure 31 has a triplet of eighth notes on 'webbed' and a quarter note on 'feet'. The piano accompaniment features a sustained chord in the right hand and a moving bass line in the left hand. Measure 32 continues the vocal line with a quarter note on 'cle-ver' and a half note on 'back - hinged knees,'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures.

33

now skit-tish-ly side-step-ping a gust-y piece of plas - tic blown a - gainst his legs,

This system contains measures 33 and 34. Measure 33 features a triplet of eighth notes on 'side-step-ping'. The piano accompaniment has a sustained chord in the right hand and a moving bass line. Measure 34 continues the vocal line with a quarter note on 'a' and a half note on 'gust-y piece of plas - tic blown a - gainst his legs,'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures.

35

hop-ping to get___ it off, now shak-ing it once or twice to make sure it's

This system contains measures 35 and 36. Measure 35 has a quarter rest followed by a quarter note on 'hop-ping' and a half note on 'to get___ it off,'. The piano accompaniment has a sustained chord in the right hand and a moving bass line. Measure 36 continues the vocal line with a quarter note on 'now' and a half note on 'shak-ing it once or twice to make sure it's'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures.

37

worth - less be-fore he turns his face to the wind, let-ting it smooth___

This system contains measures 37 and 38. Measure 37 has a quarter note on 'worth - less' and a half note on 'be-fore he turns his face to the wind,'. The piano accompaniment has a sustained chord in the right hand and a moving bass line. Measure 38 continues the vocal line with a quarter note on 'let-ting' and a half note on 'it smooth___'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures.

39

— those fine frac - tious fea - thers. —

41

poco ritard.

Some Clear Night

Gary Lawless

John Newell

♩ = 60

p

Some clear night like this, — when the

p

simile

Red. Red.

5

stars are all out and shin - ing, our old dogs will come back to us, —

3

8

out of the woods, and lead us a - long the stone wall to the

10

cove. _____ There will be fox-es, and loons, and a

13

house - boat float-ing on the lake. The trees will lean in, a

16

lan - tern swing-ing ov-er the wa-ter _____ the creak - ing of oars.

19

ritard. *a tempo*

ff Now we will learn the true names of the

21

stars. Now we will know what the trees are say-ing.

24

There is wood in the stove. We left the front door

27

There is wood in the stove. We left the front door

30

o - pen. Does the farm - house know that

33

ritard.

we are ne - ver com - ing back? _____

Why Do You Ask?

Kate Barnes

John Newell

$\text{♩} = 69$

f *with frustration*

I can't make a-ny sto-ry a-bout my life — to-night.

3

The house — is like an o - ver-turned

5

waste-bas-ket; the ra - di-o — is pre-dict-ing more

p

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8

rain.

I ask my dog to tell me a

p

9

8va

10

sto-ry, and she ne-ver he-si-tates —

poco ritard. ♩ = 63

legato sempre

p *sempre*

— with Ped.

[illegible]

15

sim - ply won-der-ful dog..."

and she stops talk - ing.

p 3 3

Ped. off

17

"Is that all?" I ask her. "Yes," she says.

19

$\text{♩} = 60$

"Why do you ask? Is - n't that e - nough?"

ritard.

with Ped.

1-23-23

In the Pasture

Kate Barnes

John Newell

At ease throughout ♩ = 63

It would be im - pos - si - ble — to

draw these three work-hor-ses — with-out a pen-cil of light — as they stand broad-side to the af-ter-noon

sun out-lined with nar-row lines of fire a - round their vast chest-nut forms, al-most

*Spoken, approximating the indicated rhythm

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7

black a - gainst the daz - zle. The young mare swings her long

9

tail from hip to hip, and her Ti - tian-blond mane hangs o - ver her

11

shoul - der like the ring - let - ted che - ve - lure of a Vic - to - ri - an belle,

13

in - no - cent and al - lur - ing. Be - yond her the two big gel - dings,

15

bro-thers and team mates, scratch each o-ther's wide red backs with care-ful in -

17

molto ritard.

ci - sors. _____

19

a tempo

a little faster ♩ = 69

Swal-lows fly o - ver the

21

grass, cloud sha - dows cross the lake and

23

dar - ken the blue of the hills on the op - po - site shore

25

but in the pas - ture the sun is

27

shin - ing, the af - ter-noon wind has dri - ven off the

29

flies, and the three big hor - ses are all at their

31 *relax the tempo*

ease; a small hap-py so - ci-e-ty of souls who are gen - tle and do no

33 $\text{♩} = 63$

harm, who live in God's pock - et, who

35

spend the long sum-mer days mov - ing from sun - shine to shade and back to the

37 *relax the tempo*

sun, who want no - thing but to be where they are.

39

ritard.

diminuendo

2-4-23

Everything Has a Heart

Deborah Cummins

John Newell

$\text{♩} = 80 - 84$ *sempre espressivo* *p*

This bulb's hid - den

p *3* *3* *simile*

Leg. *3*

4

tu - lip with its sin - gle throb of co - lor. Wild

Leg. *Leg.* *simile*

7

plum spill-ing a wind - fall _____ of crim-son fruit. _____ A

3

10

crow, odd - ly qui - et, ruff - ling its i - ri -

13

des-cence from a branch of the oak. The oak it-self, its

16

gash where a wood - y knot boils out.

19

In my gar - den, lean - ing in - to my

22

sho - vel, trust - ing in rain, roots and time, I re -

25

mind my-self ev' - ry-thing has a heart, e - ven

28

crescendo God, I'm told, who holds the *f* match to a new sea-son's light, _____

31

rat - chets up the wind as though it car - ries un - fi-nished

34

dreams, un - told sto - ries, and

37

who, I'm to be - lieve, is di - rect - ing the wild

40 *crescendo*

geese in their fa - mi - liar ruc - kus as they write a - cross the

43

sky in a bro - ken line, turn - ing south, east,

46

south a - gain, their on - ly in -

49 *crescendo*

ten - tion to catch a good ther - mal, to

52 *f*

sing hard, high a - bove the

54

earth.

p l.h.

57 *relax the tempo*

Ped.

60 *poco ritard.*

diminuendo

*

Creatures in Place

In 2022 soprano Sarah Tuttle asked me to compose a set of songs for her project, *Songs From Here*. This is an initiative to cultivate and celebrate works written by Maine-based poets and composers. It was so rewarding to collaborate with her on the task of choosing texts. While the poems that we finally chose are quite different in tone and mood, each includes at least one non-human character (e.g. moose, gull, dogs, horses, geese); the sub-title of the set could well be “Critters of Maine.” The wonderful poems that I was privileged to use are:

Boulder by Sidney Wade

Gulls in the Wind by Betsy Sholl

Some Clear Night by Gary Lawless

Why Do You Ask? and *In the Pasture* by Kate Barnes

Everything Has a Heart by Deborah Cummins

I am very pleased to dedicate this work to Sarah Tuttle and Bridget Convey, the pianist with whom she collaborates in the *Songs From Here* project. The first performances took place in the autumn of 2023 at several venues in Maine.

– John Newell

Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, composer John Newell graduated from Duke University, having pursued studies in composition, piano and conducting. He earned his M.F.A. from California Institute of the Arts, where his primary teacher was Mel Powell. John completed his formal training at SUNY Buffalo, working with Morton Feldman as recipient of the first Edgard Varèse Fellowship. Since earning his Ph.D. in 1979 he has pursued an independent creative path, composing works for orchestra, solo instruments, vocal ensembles and chamber groups.

Organizations that have commissioned works include Eight Strings & a Whistle, Bowery Ensemble and Atlantic Sinfonietta (New York), Monday Evening Concerts (Los Angeles), the Enid Symphony Orchestra (Oklahoma), Resinosa Ensemble, Passamaquoddy Bay Symphony Orchestra and Songs From Here (Maine). John self-publishes his works through Abierto Music and is a member of BMI.

An accomplished pianist and conductor, John is experienced in collaborating with performers to create and present new works. He was the founding director of Quoddy Voices, a choral ensemble based in Eastport, Maine.

John and his wife Linda now live in Bozeman, Montana. More information about his work is available at johnnewellmusic.com.

John Newell

Selected Vocal & Choral Works

Night Songs Mezzo-soprano, 'cello, piano. Advanced
Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace Soprano, piano. Intermediate
The Signature of All Things Baritone, oboe, piano. Advanced
Seven Antiphons for Advent Unison, optional chordal accompaniment. Easy
O Lord, You Have Searched Me Voice, organ. Intermediate/advanced
The Passionate Shepherd To His Love Tenor or soprano, piano. Intermediate
Four Sacred Songs Soprano or tenor, piano. Advanced

The Lake Isle of Innisfree SSATBB, a cappella. Advanced
In the Flowing Light of the Godhead SSAA, a cappella. Intermediate/advanced
Nada Te Turbe SSAA, a cappella. Intermediate
Lux Aeterna SSATB, *a cappella*. Easy/intermediate
Come Closer SSAA, *a cappella*. Intermediate/advanced
Ktaadn SATB div., piano. Intermediate
O Gladsome Light SATB div., *a cappella*. Intermediate
A Timbered Choir SATB div., piano. Eight movements. Intermediate/advanced
Children of the Light SATB, sop. & bar. solos, piano (4 hands). Intermediate
Deep River SATB, *a cappella*; arrangement. Easy/intermediate
Wexford Carol SATB, soprano solo, piano; arrangement. Easy/intermediate
Pleasure It Is SAB, *a cappella*. Easy/intermediate
God is Love SATB (some sop. div.), *a cappella*. Easy
Veni Creator Spiritus SATB div., *a cappella*. Advanced
Suite of English Lyrics SSATB *a cappella*, baritone solo. Advanced
Kyrie Eleison SATB div., *a cappella*. Advanced
Wake Up, Children! SATB *a cappella*, soprano solo. Intermediate
O Sabbath Rest of Galilee SATB *a cappella*, soprano solo. Intermediate
Noel SSATB, *a cappella*. Intermediate
Our Father, Who Art in Heaven SSATB *a cappella*. Easy