

Lamentation
on
The Disasters of War

after etchings by Francisco de Goya
for string sextet

Karim Al-Zand
(2006)

PROGRAM NOTE:

Napoleon's incursion into Spain in the year 1808 marked the beginning of a brutal and ultimately futile war. Though the French army was the world's superpower, the following six years of bloody conflict proved that even "the most determined of invaders, equipped with strong armies and copious intelligence about its enemy, can make myopic blunders that seem close to madness."¹

Napoleon's ill-fated decision to march on Spain was in part a product of his own arrogance, which did not allow him to foresee the resistance his occupation would inspire. As he wrote to one of his senior officers, he found the Spanish people "vile and cowardly, about the same as I found the Arabs to be" and he was convinced that when he brought "the words liberty, freedom from superstition, destruction of the nobility, I will be welcomed... You will see how they think of me as the liberator of Spain."

Among other things, the war brought a new word into the military lexicon: *guerrilla*. Bands of insurgents operated out of the mountains, continuously sapping the French forces of both manpower and morale through kidnapping, torture, execution and public displays of mutilation.

The civilian population of Spain was brutalized by both sides in the conflict, caught in a cycle of "oppression and outrage, atrocity and counter-atrocity; pillage, marauding, starvation, maiming, torture and murder."² They were beaten and raped by soldiers, terrorized and executed as traitorous sympathizers and driven from their homes by unremitting violence and bloodshed. Eventually thousands fled; their towns and cities conquered and re-conquered, houses burned and razed, churches looted and defiled. The ongoing military campaign also caused a devastating and widespread famine. In all, tens of thousands died. Eventually Napoleon was ousted and the Spanish monarchy was restored, only to usher in a new era of ruthless and despotic rule under Ferdinand VII.

Francisco de Goya (1746–1828) produced the series of 82 etchings known as *The Disasters of War* during the period from 1812 to 1820. The work is both a response to the horrific conflict he witnessed and a commentary on the ravages of war in general. What distinguishes *The Disasters of War* from earlier treatments of bellicose subjects is the unflinching realism of its portrayal (it almost serves as a kind of documentary, eye-witness account) and Goya's refusal to see either side in the conflict as having absolute moral superiority. The imagery is dark and violent, its message profoundly pessimistic.

Lamentation on the Disasters Of War is an elegy. While the composition is inspired by Goya's work, it does not attempt to literally portray the events and actions depicted in the images. The piece is dedicated to my late cousin Husam Al-Zand (1966–2005) who was tragically killed in Iraq last year; to his surviving wife and children; and to the rest of my courageous family in Baghdad. Peace be upon them.

1. Hughes, Robert, Goya, (2003), p. 261.

2. Geoffrey Best, War and Society in Revolutionary Europe, 1770-1870 (1982), p. 174.

Premiere performance: *Lamentation on The Disasters of War* received its premiere on April 30, 2006 by the Enso String Quartet (Maureen Nelson, John Marcus, violin; Robert Brophy, viola; Richard Belcher, cello) with violist Katherine Lewis and cellist Valdine Ritchie

 May 2006

DURATION:

ca. 10'

PERFORMANCE NOTE:

A selection of Goya's etchings, perhaps thirty or so, may be shown via projection prior to the performance, as was the case at the work's premiere; however, they should not be shown during the performance itself.

10

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla. I
Vla. II
Vc. I
Vc. II

15

poco accel. - - -
(sul II)

pp

p

(sul III)

p

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla. I
Vla. II
Vc. I
Vc. II

20

slightly faster; doleful ♩=52 (♩=104)

lyrical

mp

mp

mp < mf

mp < mf

mf > mp

mp < mf

mp

mp < mf

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla. I
Vla. II
Vc. I
Vc. II

slightly faster; melancholic ♩=58 (♩=116)

(27)

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf* *sighing*

Vla. I *mf*

Vla. II *mf* *sighing*

Vc. I *mf* *poco f*

Vc. II *mf* *poco f*

(31)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. I

Vla. II

Vc. I

Vc. II

poco rit. ————— slightly faster; tense ♩=66 (♩=44)

(37)

Vln. I *poco f* *cresc. poco a poco*

Vln. II *poco f* *cresc. poco a poco*

Vla. I *poco f* *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*

Vla. II *poco f* *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*

Vc. I *poco f*

Vc. II *poco f* *mf*

accel.

41

Musical score for measures 41-43. The score is for a string ensemble consisting of Violin I, Violin II, Viola I, Viola II, Violoncello I, and Violoncello II. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the lower strings and a more melodic line in the upper strings. Trills are marked in the Cello I part. Dynamics include *mf* and *cresc.*

44

$\text{♩} = 80$ allargando a tempo; agitated $\text{♩} = 66$ ($\text{♩} = 132$)

Musical score for measures 44-46. The score is for a string ensemble. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The music is marked *f* and includes a section of triplets. The tempo changes from $\text{♩} = 80$ to *allargando* and then back to *a tempo* with $\text{♩} = 66$ (equivalent to $\text{♩} = 132$). The Cello II part is marked *heavy*. Dynamics include *f*.

47

Musical score for measures 47-49. The score is for a string ensemble. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The music continues with triplets in the Violin II and Viola II parts. Dynamics include *f*.

slightly faster; feverish ♩=72

Musical score for measures 50-52. The score is for a string ensemble (Violins I & II, Violas I & II, and Cellos I & II). Measure 50 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The tempo is 'slightly faster; feverish' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. Dynamics include *cresc.*, *tr³*, *ff*, and *f*. A 'flashing' effect is indicated in the Cello II part.

Musical score for measures 53-55. The score continues for the string ensemble. Measure 53 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The tempo is 'slightly faster; feverish' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4. Dynamics include *ff* and *f*. A 'poco accel.' marking is present at the end of the section.

slightly faster; frantic ♩=76

molto accel. - - - - - (♩=144)

Musical score for measures 56-59. The score continues for the string ensemble. Measure 56 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The tempo is 'slightly faster; frantic' with a quarter note equal to 76 beats. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. Dynamics include *piuf*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. The tempo changes to 'molto accel.' with a quarter note equal to 144 beats.

, slightly faster than before; anguished ♩=80

60 frenetic (♩=144)

Musical score for measures 60-62. The score is for a string quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola I, Viola II, Violoncello I, Violoncello II). The tempo is frenetic (♩=144). The dynamics are *sub mf* for measures 60-61 and *ff* for measure 62. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets. The woodwinds (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla. I, Vla. II, Vc. I, Vc. II) play a melodic line with triplets and slurs.

63

Musical score for measures 63-65. The score is for a string quartet. The tempo is frenetic (♩=144). The dynamics are *ff*. The key signature has two flats. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets. The woodwinds play a melodic line with triplets and slurs, marked with *sweeping* and *weighty*.

66

♩.=♩ suddenly fierce, violent (♩.=160)

Musical score for measures 66-68. The score is for a string quartet. The tempo is suddenly fierce, violent (♩.=160). The dynamics are *f*. The key signature has two flats. The time signature changes from 2/4 to 6/8. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets. The woodwinds play a melodic line with triplets and slurs, marked with *f* and *pizz.*

70

Violin I: *f*, *pizz. forcefully*, *f*
Violin II: *f*, *pizz. forcefully*, *f*
Viola I: *f*
Viola II: *f*
Violoncello I: *arco*, *arco*, *ff*
Violoncello II: *arco*, *arco*, *ff*

Measures 70-75. The score is in 6/8 time. Measures 70-71 are in G major. Measures 72-75 are in D major. The first violin and second violin parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings of *f* and *pizz. forcefully*. The viola parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The cello parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings of *arco* and *ff*.

76

Violin I: *arco*, *pizz.*, *arco*
Violin II: *arco*, *pizz.*, *arco*
Viola I: *cresc.*
Viola II: *cresc.*
Violoncello I: *ff*
Violoncello II: *ff*, *cresc.*

Measures 76-80. The score is in 9/8 time. Measures 76-77 are in G major. Measures 78-80 are in D major. The first violin and second violin parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings of *arco* and *pizz.*. The viola parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment with a *cresc.* marking. The cello parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings of *ff* and *cresc.*.

81

Violin I: *cresc.*
Violin II: *cresc.*
Viola I: *cresc.*
Viola II: *cresc.*
Violoncello I: *cresc.*
Violoncello II: *cresc.*

Measures 81-85. The score is in 6/8 time. Measures 81-82 are in G major. Measures 83-85 are in D major. The first violin and second violin parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings of *cresc.*. The viola parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment with a *cresc.* marking. The cello parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and dynamic markings of *cresc.*. A tempo change to 2/4 is indicated at measure 83 with the instruction *♩. = ♩ as before*.

96 G.P. Slowly; calm, placid $\text{♩} = 60$

ppizz.

Vln. I *fff* *pp*

Vln. II *fff* *pp* *sul tasto*

Vla. I *fff* *pp*

Vla. II *fff* *pp* *pizz.* *arco*

Vc. I *pp* *arco sul tasto*

Vc. II *fff* *pp* *sul tasto*

105

lightly *arco*

Vln. I *pp* *p* *ord.*

Vln. II *p* *ord.*

Vla. I *p* *ord.*

Vla. II *p* *ord.*

Vc. I *ord.* *p* *t^b*

Vc. II *p* *pizz. arpeg. slowly* *p*

111 a little quicker $\text{♩} = 66$ poco rit.

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. I *mp*

Vla. II *mp*

Vc. I *mp* *t^b*

Vc. II *mf* *arco* *mp* *mf*

118 slightly slower; somber ♩=58 (with rubato)

Musical score for measures 118-122. The score is for a string ensemble (Violins I & II, Violas I & II, Cellos I & II). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4. Dynamics include *mf* and *mp*.

poco rit. a tempo

stretto - - - - - ten. ^{8^{va}} a tempo

Musical score for measures 123-128. The score is for a string ensemble. The key signature has one flat. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4. Dynamics include *cresc.*, *f*, *sub p*, *ten.*, and *mp*.

129 poco rit. a tempo

Musical score for measures 129-133. The score is for a string ensemble. The key signature has one flat. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4. Dynamics include *decresc.*, *pp*, and *mf*.

molto rit. - - - - - Slowly; stark ♩=48

134

Vln. I *poco f* *sub mf* *pp* *sub mf*

Vln. II *poco f* *pp*

Vla. I *poco f* *pp*

Vla. II *poco f* *pp*

Vc. I *poco f* *sub mf* *pp* *sub mf*

Vc. II *mf* *pp*

as before, melancholic ♩=52 accel. - - - - -

142

Vln. I *pp* *mf* *cresc.*

Vln. II *p* *cresc.*

Vla. I *p* *mp* *cresc.*

Vla. II *p* *cresc.*

Vc. I *p* *cresc.*

Vc. II *pp* *p* *mp* *cresc.*

♩=76 rit. - - - - - ♩=60

148

Vln. I *f* *decresc.* *p* *mp* *mournful*

Vln. II *f* *decresc.* *mp* *mournful*

Vla. I *f* *decresc.* *p* *sim.* *mp*

Vla. II *f* *decresc.* *p* *sim.* *mp*

Vc. I *f* *decresc.* *p* *sim.* *mp* *pizz.*

Vc. II *f* *mf* *mp*

154 rit. *morendo*

Vln. I *p sim. pp morendo n*

Vln. II *p sim. pp morendo n*

Vla. I *p pp morendo n*

Vla. II *p pp arco sul IV morendo n*

Vc. I *p pp morendo n*

Vc. II *p pp morendo n*

