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(3. Five Soutar songs)

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**Richard Barron**

***Five Soutar Songs***

**A sequence of settings of poems  
of  
William Soutar**

**For  
Soprano and Piano**

## Five Soutar Songs

This is a sequence of settings of five poems by the Scots poet William Soutar (1898-1943), for Soprano and Piano. The texts of the songs are shown on the following page.

In the third song, 'Faith', *Sprechgesang* passages, notated with square noteheads, are intended to be closer to singing than speaking. *Sprechstimme* passages, notated with crossed noteheads, are intended to be closer to speaking than singing.

Duration is around 18 minutes.

The songs were first performed in March 2019, at the Scottish Music Centre in Glasgow. The soprano was Nora Holden, with the composer at the piano.

## Five Soutar Songs: the texts

### 1. Ae Simmer's Day

Up by the caller fountain,  
A' through a simmer's day,  
I heard the gowk gang cryin  
Abune the ferny brae.

The reemlin licht afore me  
Gaed up; the wind stude still:  
Only the gowk's saft whistle  
Lowden'd along the hill.

The wee burn loppert laichly;  
A bird cam and was gaen:  
I keekit round ahint me  
For I was a' my lane.

(1932)

### 2. The Sea-Shell

Listen! For a lost world maunners here  
Frae the cauld mou o' a shell;  
And sae far awa the blufferts blare  
And the sea-birds skreel:

And the wail o' women along yon shore  
Whaur the swaw comes rowin in;  
And the swurly waters whummlin owre  
The cry o' the sailor-men.

(1941)

### 3. Faith

Look up; and yonder on the brae,  
Like a sang in silence born,  
Wi' the dayspring o' the day  
Walks the snaw-white unicorn.

Sae far awa he leams in licht;  
And yet his glitter burns atween  
The darkness hung ahint the hicht  
And hidden in the lifted e'en.

Look down and down; frae ilka airt  
The flutherin worlds through darkness fa':  
But yon bricht beast walks, in the hert,  
Sae far awa; sae far awa.

(1938)

### 4. Brichtness

Frae straucht abune  
The licht dreels down,  
And the bare stane  
Lowes in the toun.

Through reemlin air  
Steeple and street  
Are burnin clear  
In steady heat:

In steady fire  
Sae crystal bricht  
Causey and spire  
Burn back to licht.

(1943)

### 5. Song

Whaur yon broken brig hings owre;  
Whaur yon water maks nae soun';  
Babylon blows by in stour:  
Gang doun wi' a sang, gang doun.

Deep, owre deep, for onie drouth:  
Wan eneuch an ye wud droun:  
Saut, or seelfu', for the mouth;  
Gang doun wi' a sang, gang doun.

Babylon blows by in stour  
Whaur yon water maks nae soun':  
Darkness is your only door;  
Gang doun wi'a sang, gang doun.

(1935)

# 1. Ae Simmer's Day

Richard Barron

**Leggiero** ♩ = 60

**Soprano**

**Piano**

*p*

Up by the cal-ler

6

fountain, A' through a sim-mer's day, I heard the gowk gang

8<sup>va</sup>

10 *mp* *p*

cry-in A - bune the — fern - y brae.

8<sup>va</sup>

*mp* *pp*

14 *p*

The reem - lin licht a -

8<sup>va</sup>

18 *mf* *mp rit.* *p*

fore me Gaed <sup>3</sup> up; the wind stude still; On - ly the

(8<sup>va</sup>)

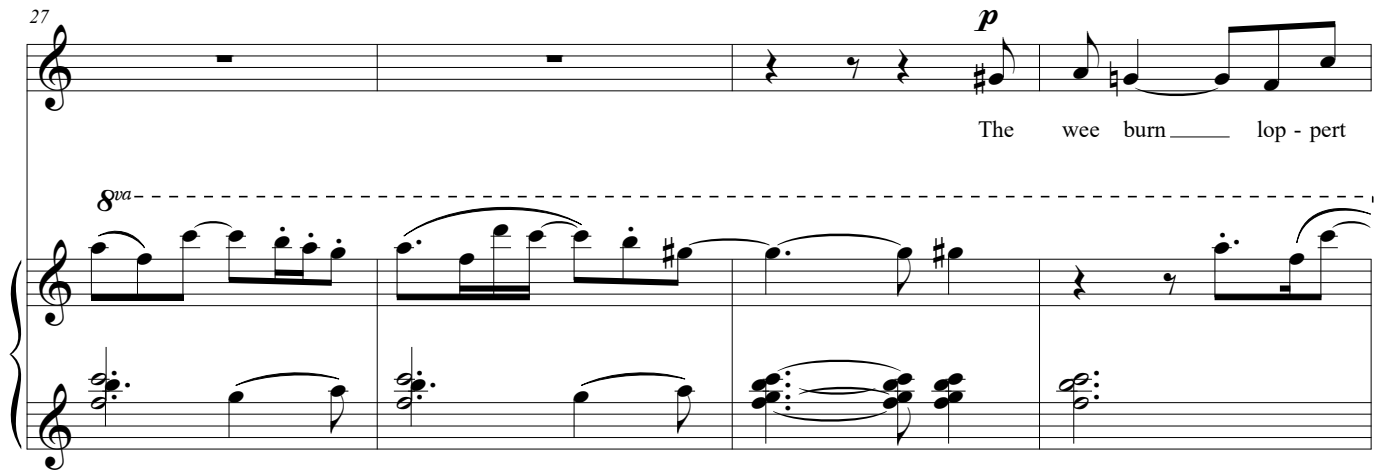
23 *pp* *a tempo*

gowk's s(ss)aft whi - stle low-den'd a - lang the hill.

(8<sup>va</sup>)

27 *p*

The wee burn — lop - pert



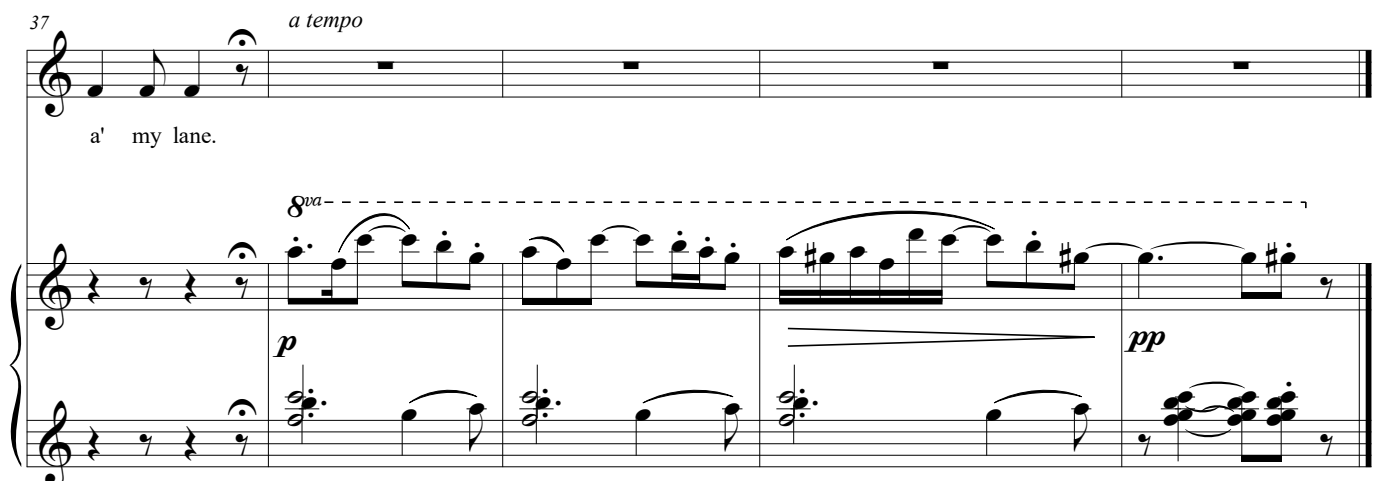
31 *rit.*

laich-ly; A bird cam and was gaen: I keek-it round a - hint me For I was



37 *a tempo*

a' my lane.



## 2. The Sea-Shell

Dolente ♩ = 65

Musical score for measures 1-5. The score is in 4/4 time and D major. The piano part features a series of chords in the left hand, with a melodic line in the right hand. The tempo is marked 'Dolente' with a quarter note equal to 65 beats per minute. The dynamic is 'pp' (pianissimo). The text 'una corda' is written below the piano part.

Musical score for measures 6-11. The score continues the piano part. The right hand (RH) and left hand (LH) parts are indicated. The dynamic is 'ppp' (pianississimo). The text 'Li-sten! \_\_\_\_' is written above the right hand part.

Musical score for measures 12-15. The score continues the piano part. The right hand (RH) and left hand (LH) parts are indicated. The dynamic is 'ppp' (pianississimo). The text 'Li - sten! \_\_\_\_' is written above the right hand part, and 'for a lost world \_\_\_\_ maun-ners \_\_\_\_ here' is written below the right hand part.



17 *p* *pp* *gliss.*

Frae the cauld mou \_\_\_\_\_ o' a shell; And sae far \_\_\_\_\_ a - wa \_\_\_\_\_

*ppp* *pp* *sempre ppp*

*8va* *8vb*

22 *fp* *f* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*

\_\_\_\_\_ the bluf - ferts blare \_\_\_\_\_ And the sea - birds \_\_\_\_\_ skr(r) - ee -

*mf* *mf* *f* *3* *p*

*tre corde*

25 *l(l):*

*p* *ppp*

The musical score is for a piece titled '2. The Sea-Shell'. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 17-21) features a vocal line with lyrics 'Frae the cauld mou o' a shell; And sae far a - wa'. The piano accompaniment includes a right hand with a glissando and a left hand with a sustained bass line. The second system (measures 22-24) has lyrics 'the bluf - ferts blare And the sea - birds skr(r) - ee -'. The piano accompaniment features a right hand with a triplet and glissandos, and a left hand with chords and a triplet. The third system (measures 25-28) starts with a vocal line 'l(l):' and a piano accompaniment with chords and a sustained bass line. Dynamics include piano (p), pianissimo (pp), fortissimo (f), and fortississimo (fff). Performance instructions like 'gliss.', '8va', '8vb', and 'tre corde' are present.

29

*mf* *f* *p* *f* *molto cresc.* *pp*

32

*f* *ff* *p* *ff* *8va*

36

*p* *gliss.* *f* *p*

And the \_\_ wail o' wo-men \_\_ a-lang yon shore (rr)

*pp* *f* *pp* *una corda*

40 *pp*  
a - lang

46 *mf* *rit.*  
yon shore Whaur the swaw comes row-in in; And the

50 *f* *gliss.* *p* *gliss.* *pp*  
swur - ly wa - ters whumm - lin owre The cry o' the sail - or - men - (nn)

### 3. Faith

The snaw-white unicorn

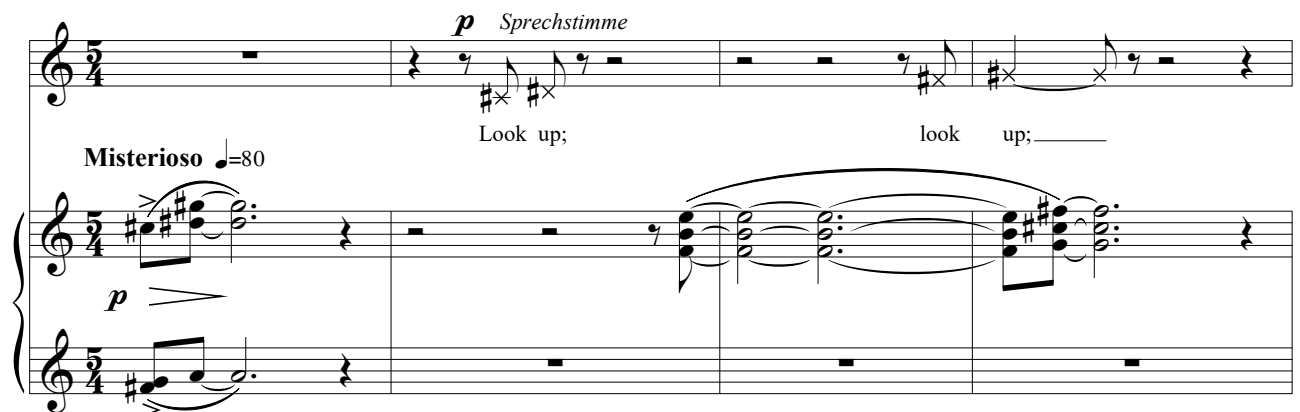
Misterioso ♩=80

*p* Sprechstimme

Look up; look up; \_\_\_\_\_

Misterioso ♩=80

*p*



5

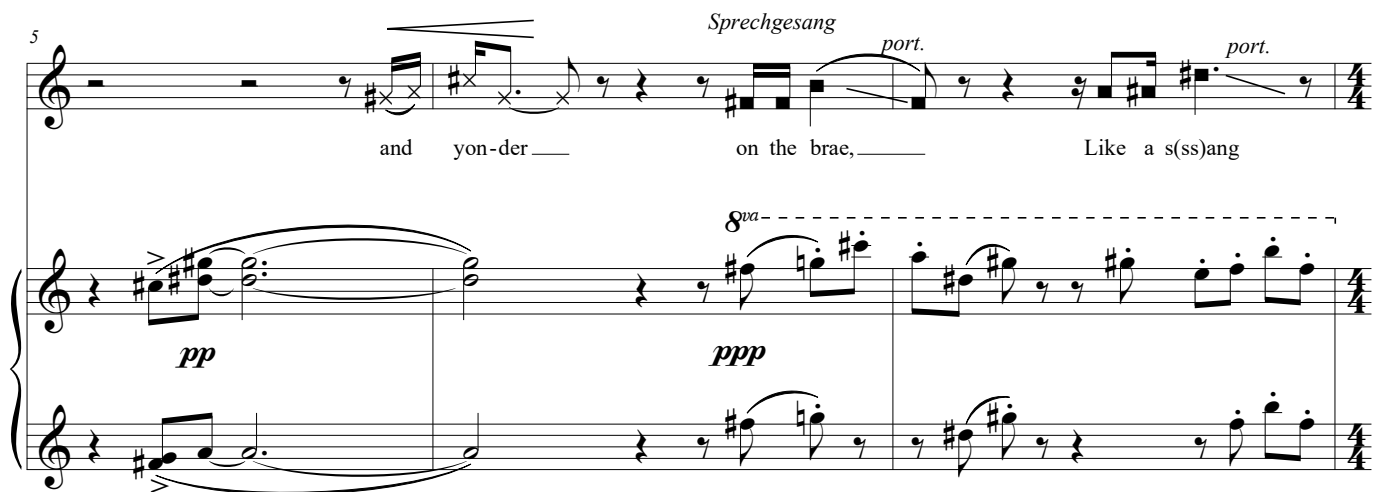
Sprechgesang

and yon-der \_\_\_\_\_ on the brae, \_\_\_\_\_ Like a s(ss)ang

*pp*

*ppp*

8<sup>va</sup>-



8

*port.*

*mf*

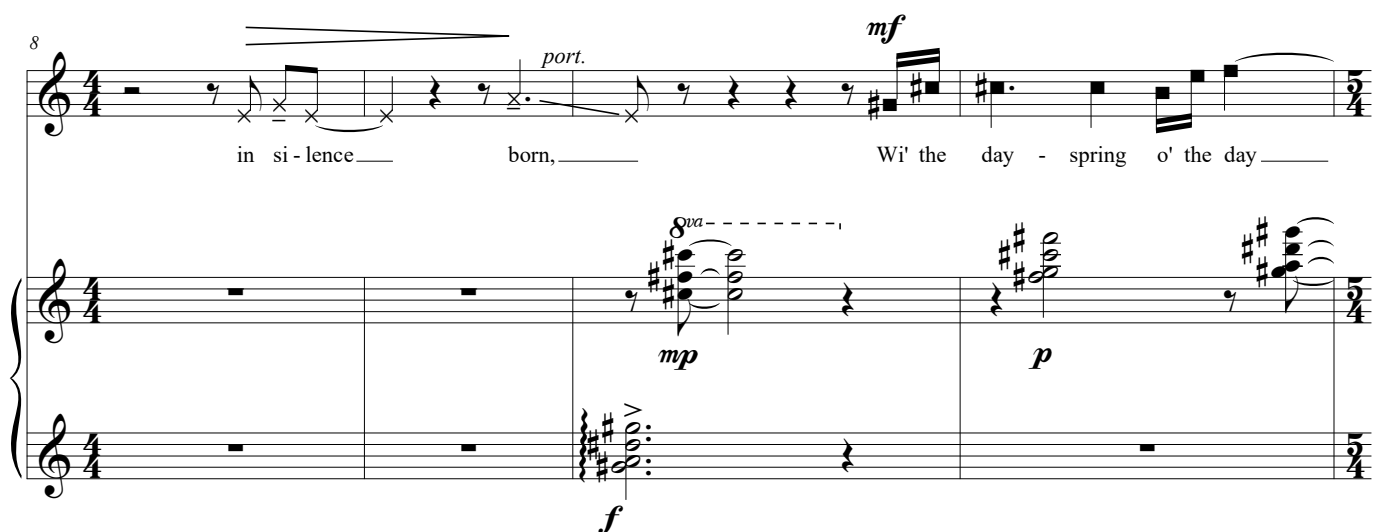
in si-lence \_\_\_\_\_ born, \_\_\_\_\_ Wi' the day - spring o' the day \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

*p*

*f*

8<sup>va</sup>-



12

Walks the snaw - white u - ni - corn - (rnn).

*mp*

*pp*

15

Sae far a - wa a - wa he leams in

*p* *port.* *port.*

*ppp* *pp*

18

licht; And yet his glit-ter

*mf*

*mf*

20

*f* *ff* *subito p*

burns — a - tween The dark - ness hung a - hint the hicht And

*f* *ff* *pp*

23

— hid - den — in the lift - ed e'en. — Look doun and doun; —

*pp*

26

— frae il - ka airt — The — flu - ther - in worlds —

*sempre pp*

28

Musical score for measures 28-29. The vocal line (treble clef) has a 7/4 time signature and lyrics: "through dark - ness \_\_\_\_\_ fa': \_\_\_\_\_". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand. Measure 29 ends with a 4/4 time signature.

30

Musical score for measures 30-32. The vocal line (treble clef) has a 4/4 time signature and contains rests. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a melody in the right hand starting with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic. The time signature changes to 3/4 for measure 31 and returns to 4/4 for measure 32.

33

*accel.*

Musical score for measures 33-34. The vocal line (treble clef) has a 4/4 time signature and contains rests. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The tempo marking *accel.* (accelerando) is present above the right hand, and *cresc.* (crescendo) is present below the left hand. Measure 34 ends with a 5-measure rest indicated by a '5' below the staff.

35

*mf* *dim.* 8va

37

Primo tempo

(8va) *pp* 3 *p* Primo tempo

40

*p*

But — yon bricht ———— beast walks,

*p* *pp*



43

in the hert, Sae far a - wa;

8va

3

46

*pp*

sae far a - wa.

(8va)

*ppp*

49

(8va)

a niente

## 4. Brighthouse

Scherzando ♩ = 108

*p*

Frae straucht a - bune(nn) — Frae straucht a - bune a - bune

*pp* *pp*

*p* < *mp*

5 *f* *p* *gliss.*

The licht dreels down,

*f* *pp* 3

10 *8va* *pp* *mf* *pp*

5 3 5 3 6

12 *p*

And the bare stane

14 *mp* *mp*

Lowes Lowes in the

16 *pp*

toun(n).

*espressivo* *f*

20 *p* *mf*

Through reem-lin air \_\_\_\_\_ Steep - le and street \_\_\_\_\_ Are burn - in clear \_\_\_\_\_ In stea-dy

8<sup>va</sup>

*p* *mf* 3

25 *pp* *mf*

— heat. In stea-dy fire \_\_\_\_\_ Sae — crys-tal bricht

*ppp* 3 *pp*

30 *p* *rit.*

— Cau-sey and spire Burn back to licht.

*pp*

For Ken

## 5. Song

Gang doun wi' a sang, gang doun

Andante ♩ = 60

The first system of the musical score is in 2/4 time. The vocal line (treble clef) contains five measures of whole rests. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) begins with a bass line of sustained octaves in the left hand, marked *p*. The right hand features a melody starting in the second measure, marked *ppp*, with triplet markings (3) over the eighth notes. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

The second system continues the piano accompaniment from the first system. The vocal line remains silent. The piano accompaniment continues with the same bass line and right-hand melody, maintaining the *ppp* dynamic and triplet markings.

The third system begins at measure 11. The vocal line (treble clef) enters with the lyrics "Whaur yon—" in measure 11, marked *p*, and "Whaur yon bro - ken brig" in measure 13, marked with a triplet (3). The piano accompaniment (grand staff) continues with the same bass line and right-hand melody, marked *ppp* with a triplet (3) in measure 13. The key signature remains two sharps.

15

hings owre; Whaur yon wa-ter maks nae soun(nn):

*mp* *pp*

18

Ba-by - lon

*pp* *subito p* *p*

*8va*

*3* *3* *3* *5*

*una corda*

20

Ba - by-lon blaws by in s(s)tour:

*agitato* *mf* *gliss.* *f*

*3* *5* *5*

*8va*

*agitato* *f* *mf* *f*

*tre corde*

22

*rall.*

*a tempo*

*rall.*

*8va*

*a tempo*

*p*

*pp*

*ppp*

*sf*

*p*

24

*p* *pp*

Gang doun wi' a sang, gang

*pp* *ppp*

8va

3

3

28

28

doun. Deep, owre

morendo

pp

32 *mf* *p*

deep, for o - nie — dr(r)outh(th): — Wan e - neuch an ye wud droun:

8<sup>va</sup> — — — — —

3 *mf* *p*

36 *mf*

Saut

3 *mf* *f* *subito p*

40 *p* **Leggiero** ♩. = 60

— Saut, or seel - fu', — for the mouth;

*mf* *p* *pp* 8<sup>va</sup> — — — — —

**Leggiero** ♩. = 60



43

Primo tempo ♩ = 60

*p*

Gang doun wi' a

(8<sup>va</sup>)

Primo tempo ♩ = 60

46

*pp*

sang, — gang doun.

*ppp*

*p* *leggiere* 3

49

*mp* *pp* 3

*mf* 3 3 3 3

8<sup>va</sup>

51 *accel.* *agitato* *mf*

Ba -

(8va) *accel.*

*subito p* *f* *subito p* *mf*

*agitato*

5 3 3 5

53 *gliss.* *f* *rall.*

- by-lon blows by in s(s)tour: \_\_\_\_\_

(8va) *rall.* (8va)

*f* *p*

5 3 3

55 *a tempo*

(8va) *a tempo*

*pp* *ppp* *pp*

5 3

57 *p* *pp*

Whaur yon wa - ter maksnae s(s)oun(n):

61 *p*

Dark - ness

65 *Leggiero* ♩. = 60

*Leggiero* ♩. = 60

*pp*

68 **Primo tempo** ♩ = 60 *p*

Dark-ness is your on-ly door;

*p*

8vb

71 *a piacere* *p* *mp*

Gang doun wi' a sang,

*pp*

(8vb) 8vb

74 *rall.* *pp*

gang doun - (nn).

*pp*

3

(8vb)