

John Carbon

Letters from Abigail

for soprano, cello and piano

JC COLLECTIONS

The Music of American Composer **John Carbon**

Born in Chicago in 1951, John Carbon studied composition at Rice University and at the University of California at Santa Barbara, where his teachers were Thea Musgrave, Paul Cooper, and Peter Racine Fricker. He is now Professor of Music at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Carbon's music--which has been gaining prominence in the past few years due to an increasing number of high-profile performances and recordings--includes two operas, *Marie Laveau* and *Benjamin*, along with many choral, orchestral, vocal, and chamber works. Carbon has a special flair for the virtuosity and drama needed for concertos, and has completed works in this genre for clarinet, violin, piano, and most recently double bass.

Mr. Carbon's work has been performed in New York at Merkin Concert Hall, Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher and Alice Tully Halls at Lincoln Center, Boston's Symphony Hall, and Prague's Smetana Hall. Premieres of Carbon works have been presented by the New York Chamber Symphony, the Czech Radio Orchestra, and the Alaria Chamber Ensemble of New York. His *Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra* (premiered under Gerard Schwarz at Avery Fisher Hall in November of 1997) was hailed by New York Times critic Allen Kozinn for "its demandingly agile clarinet line that wove its way through a variegated orchestral fabric rich in coloristic effects of the sort that create a sense of depth rather than artificial glitter." Recordings of Carbon's music include his *Violin Concerto*, released on Three American Concertos (MMC 2059), performed by Violinist Peter Zazofsky with Gerhardt Zimmermann conducting the Warsaw National Philharmonic Orchestra. Fanfare critic Robert Maxham praised the concerto for the "...finale's dazzling kinetic virtuosity," and in American Record Guide Bill Faucett commented on the concerto's "...many moments of genuine beauty..." Also becoming well known is the *Clarinet Concerto*, in a spectacular and highly-acclaimed performance with soloist Richard Stoltzman on MMC 2031 with the Warsaw Philharmonic, and *Notturmo for Trumpet, Harp, and Strings*, performed by Gerard Schwarz (with Jeff Silberschlag on trumpet) and the Seattle Symphony on Delos. (New Yorkers had a chance to hear Notturmo live when it was performed by George Manahan leading the New York Chamber Symphony in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center in April, 1999). Other recordings include two orchestral works--*Hommage à Trois*, played by the Slovak Radio Symphony under Szymon Kawalla on Vienna Modern Masters 3011, and *Inner Voices* on MMC 2003 with the Warsaw Philharmonic under Robert Black--and a chamber work for flute and guitar, *Paseos*, on CGS 1024223.

Performances have included several premieres by Ensemble Giverny, with members of the Portland Symphony Orchestra, at the Portland Art Museum, as part of the release of a widely broadcast compact disc recording released by Moonbridge Recordings, *Waterlilies; Musical Visions of Monet*, in conjunction with the opening of the museum's exhibit centering on the late paintings of Monet. The much-acclaimed chamber music group Alaria, with guest clarinetist Doris Hall-Gulati, performed *Dreamspiral* by Mr. Carbon in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 1999 as part of their chamber music series. Premieres have included those by the Philadelphia Trio in Weiss Center for the Performing Arts at Bucknell University of *Do Not Go Gentle* and a new chamber music setting of arias from the composer's opera *Benjamin* in Merkin Concert Hall, New York City. Most recently, performances have included those by the Philadelphia-based Network for New Music, Trio Fedele, cellist Stephen Balderston, pianist Edith Orloff, and an appointment as American composer in residence at the 2nd Annual Santa Barbara Chamber Music Festival in June, 2004.

In July, 2002, MMC Recordings released *John Carbon*, a recording of the composer's *Piano Concerto*, *Rasgos*, *Rhapsody for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra* and *Ghost Town Sketches*, with conductors Vladmír Valék, Maron Alsop, Gerard Schwarz and David Stock conducting the Czech Radio Orchestra, Concordia Orchestra of New York City, the New York Chamber Symphony, and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, with soloists pianist William Koseluk, violinist Claire Chan, clarinetist Doris Hall-Gulati, and members of the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble. In 2005-2006 recording releases included *Rasgos*, for violin, harp and winds, performed by Claire Chan with Concordia Orchestra, conducted by Maron Alsop and the premiere recording of *Endangered Species*, a new doublebass concerto commissioned by bassist Richard Fredrickson for an MMC release. This work was recorded by the Slovak Radio Orchestra in Bratislava, Slovakia, in November, 2002. Performances in 2006 included a fully staged production of *Benjamin*, the composer's comic opera with libretto by Sarah White at Franklin & Marshall College as part of the National 300th Celebration. A live-performance version of this performance will be released by Zimbel Recordings in October, 2007.

Adapted from the letters
of Abigail Adams
by Sarah White
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Letters from Abigail

John Carbon (2001)

1. Dear Friend

$\text{♩} = 72$
Adagio 1

un poco tristamente...
mf

Soprano

Dear Friend, How

Cello

mf *mp*

Piano

mf *mp*

6

Sop.

ar-dent-ly I long for your re - turn.

f *mp*

Vc.

mf cantando

Pno.

mf 3

10 *mf* *f* *mf*

Sop. The i - de - a plays a - bout my Heart.

Vc.

Pno. *mp*

14 *mp* *mp*

Sop. Un-nerves my hand as I write,

Vc. tremolo *p*

Pno. *dim.* *p*

18 poco appassionato... cresc. *mf* *mp*

Sop. A - wa - kens all the ten - der sen - ti - ments,

Vc. non trem. tremolo cresc. *mf* *mp*

Pno. cresc. *mf* *mp*

22

Sop. *mf* *f* *dim.* *mf*
May the like sen-sa - tions en - ter thy breast,

Vc. *cresc.* *mf* *dim.*
(non trem.) tremolo

Pno. *cresc.* *mf* *dim.*

26

Sop. *dim.* *mp* *p* *mp*
and (in spite of all the weight - y cares of

Vc. *mp* *p* *mp*
non trem.

Pno. *mp* *p*

31

Sop. *p* teneramente
Ming - gle them -

Vc. *espr.* *dim.* *p*

Pno. *mp* *dim.* *p*

34

rit.
dim. *pp*

Sop. selves with those I wish to com - mun - i - cate.

Vc. *dim.* *pp*

Pno. *dim.* *pp*

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Soprano (Sop.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). The Soprano part is in treble clef and has the lyrics "selves with those I wish to communicate." The Violoncello part is in bass clef. The Piano part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score includes dynamic markings such as *rit.* (ritardando), *dim.* (diminuendo), and *pp* (pianissimo). There are also slurs and phrasing marks throughout the score.

♩=80

2. Our Barbarous Foes

Allegro agitato

Soprano

Cello

Piano

43

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

47

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

f

I heard yes - ter - day from

50

Sop. *Bos - ton that their - dis - tress in - -*

Vc. *3 3*

Pno.

53

Sop. *creased u - pon them fast, A num - ber of*

Vc.

Pno.

56

Sop. *arm - - - ed cut - ters fired u - pon our*

Vc.

Pno. *3 3 3*

ff f

60

Sop. Men. with a

Vc. 3 3 3 3

Pno.

64

Sop. hot and hea - - - vy fire,

Vc. 3

Pno.

67

Sop. bul - lets fly - - - ing in

Vc. 3 3 3

Pno.

ff *f*

70

Sop. Sop. ev - ery di - rec - - tion

Vc.

Pno.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 70-72. The soprano part has lyrics 'ev - ery di - rec - - tion'. The vocal line is in a 6/8 time signature. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. Trills are present in the piano part at the end of the system.

73

Sop. Sop. and the Men of Wars

Vc.

Pno.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 73-75. The soprano part has lyrics 'and the Men of Wars'. The vocal line continues in 6/8 time. The piano accompaniment includes triplets in both hands, particularly in the right hand.

76

Sop. Sop. ply - ing them with small arms.

Vc.

Pno.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 76-78. The soprano part has lyrics 'ply - ing them with small arms.'. The vocal line continues in 6/8 time. The piano accompaniment features a consistent eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand, with triplets in the right hand.

rit.

79

Sop. We were up all night. We were up all

Vc.

Pno.

82 $\text{♩} = 80$ *mf* appassionato

Sop. night. Oh 3 my

Vc. *mp* 3

Pno. *mp* 3 *espr.* *sempre legato*

85 *f*

Sop. dear Friend, I could not live

Vc. *cresc.* *mf* 3 3

Pno. *cresc.* *mf* 3 3

89 *mf*

Sop. To en - dure the Thought of my Hab - i - tat - tion Des - o - la - ted, my

Vc. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

93 *mp*

Sop. child - ren butch - ered. Eve - ry

Vc. *p*

Pno. *p*

96 *rit.*

Sop. week pro - duc - es some Hor - rid scene Per - pe - trat-ed by our

Vc.

Pno.

99 *dim.* *p*

Sop. Bar - bar - ous foes.

Vc. *pp*

Pno. *dim.* *pp*

$\text{♩} = 58$
Grave

interlude 1

rit. A tempo *mp*

Soprano

molto rubato e doloroso

The drought

Cello

mf *mp*

Piano

p

105

Sop.

has been ver - y se - vere. My poor

Vc.

mf *cresc.* *f* *mp*

Pno.

mf *f* *mp*

109

Sop.

Cows will cer - tain - ly prof - fer - a pe - ti - tion to you,

Vc.

mf

Pno.

p *mf*

113

Sop. *p* Set-ting forth *mf* their Greav-en-ces and in - form-ing you That they have

Vc. *p* *mf* pizz.

Pno. *mf*

117

Sop. been de - prived of their an - cient priv-i - leg-es, And de - sir-ing that they may be re-stored to

Vc.

Pno.

121

Sop. them. *mf* They hum - bly pray

Vc. *mp* *p* arco *mf*

Pno. *p* *mp*

rit.

124

Sop. *mp* *pp*
that you would con - sid - er them...

Vc. *mp* *pp*

Pno. *mf* *p* *pp*

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the Soprano (Sop.), the middle for the Violoncello (Vc.), and the bottom for the Piano (Pno.). The Soprano part begins at measure 124 with a rest, followed by a melodic line with lyrics 'that you would consider them...'. The dynamics are marked *mp* and *pp*. The Violoncello part features a triplet of eighth notes and other melodic lines, with dynamics *mp* and *pp*. The Piano part provides harmonic support with chords and sustained notes, marked with *mf*, *p*, and *pp*. A *rit.* marking is placed above the Soprano staff, and a dashed line extends from it across the top of the page.

$\text{♩} = 120$
Moderato ed ironicamente interlude 2

Soprano *mf* *f*
Their Beef is all spent, their Malt and Ci - der all

Cello *mf* *f*

Piano *mf* *f*

Poco piu agitato

133 Sop. gone. A poor Milch cow last week

Vc.

Pno.

139

Sop. *ff* *rit.* *A tempo* *mf*

was kill'd in Town and sold for a

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *ff* *mf*

145

Sop. *mp* *rit.*

shil - ling a pound. Their Beef is all spent....

Vc. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

♩=80
Allegro jubilante

3. Victory!

Soprano

Cello

Piano

151

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

The Bells rang. The Bells rang.

153

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

The Pri - va -

mf *cresc.*

155

Sop. *f*
teers fired,

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

156

Sop.

Vc. *cresc.* *ff*

Pno. *cresc.* *ff*

157

Sop. the forts and Bat ter - ies, the can - non were

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

159

Sop. *dis - - charg - ed.*

Vc.

Pno.

160

Sop.

Vc. *mp cresc.*

Pno. *mp cresc.*

161

Sop. *the forts and Bat-ter - ies, the pla - toons*

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

163

Sop. fol - lowed,

Vc.

Pno.

165

Sop. and eve - ry face ap - peared joy - ful.

Vc.

Pno.

167

Sop.

Vc. *mp* *cresc.*

Pno. *mp* *cresc.*

168

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

169

ff

Sop.

Cruel as this war has been

Vc.

ff

Pno.

171

Sop.

I could not ex-change my coun - try For the

Vc.

3

Pno.

173

Sop. Sop. Wealth of the In - dies For the Wealth of the In - dies

Vc.

Pno.

175

Sop. Sop. Though I might be Queen or Em - press of an - y

Vc.

Pno.

177

Sop. Sop. Na - - tion

Vc.

Pno.

178

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

mf *cresc.*

mf *cresc.*

179

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

an - - y Na - tion U - pon the Globe

ff

ff

181

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

U - pon the Globe.

182

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Soprano (Sop.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). The Soprano part begins at measure 182 with a long note that has a fermata above it. The Violoncello part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Piano part has a complex rhythmic pattern with accents and a fortissimo (ffz) dynamic marking. The score is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature.

♩=120

4. Remember the Ladies...

Allegro con fuoco

Soprano

Cello

Piano

Whilst you

f

mf *fp* *f*

f *mf* *f*

188

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

are pro - claim - ing peace and good will to

mf

mf

191 *f* *ff* *mf*

Sop. Men, Em - an - ci - pat - ing

Vc. *f* *fp* *ff* *mf*

Pno. *f* *ff* *mf*

194 *f*

Sop. all Na - tions, you in -

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

196 *ff* *ff*

Sop. sist u - pon re - tain - ing an

Vc. *ff*

Pno. *ff*

198

Sop. *ab - so - lute po - wer ov - er Wives.*

Vc.

Pno.

200

Sop. *In the*

Vc.

Pno.

f *fp* *f* *mf*

203

Sop. *new Code of Laws I would de - sire*

Vc.

Pno.

cresc. *f* *mp* *cresc.*

206

Sop. *f* *ff*
you to Re - mem - ber - the La - dies.

Vc. *f* *fp* *ff*

Pno. *f* *ff*

209

Sop. *f* *ben agitato*
Do not put such un -

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

211

Sop. *ff*
lim - i - ted po - wer in - to the hands of the

Vc. *cresc.*

Pno. *cresc.*

213 *3* declamando *rit.*

Sop. in - to the hands of the Hus - bands.

Vc. *cresc.* *ff*

Pno. *cresc.* *ff*

$\text{♩} = 80$
Meno mosso
Più calmo *accel.*

216

Sop.

Vc. *fp* *ff* *pp*

Pno. *pp* *3* *3* *3*

219 *mp* risoluto

Sop. If par -

Vc.

Pno. *mp* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

222

Sop. *mp* *mf*

Vc.

Pno. *cresc. poco a poco gradualmente*

tic - u - lar care and at - ten tion is not paid to the La - dies

$\text{♩} = 120$

225 **Tempo primo** *mf* *f* *cresc. molto*

Sop.

Vc.

Pno. *mf* *cresc. molto* *f* *cresc. molto*

we are de ter-mined to fo-ment a

rit. *cresc. molto; diventando agitato* *ff* // *Meno mosso*
diventando più calmo ♩=80

228

Sop. Re - bell - ion a Re - bell - ion.

Vc.

Pno. *ff* *fp* *ff* *p*

232 un poco sensibile *p*

Sop. Give up the harsh ti - tle of Mas - ter

Vc.

Pno. *p*

235

Sop. Give up the harsh ti - tle of Mas - ter for

Vc.

Pno.

rit. .

238

Sop. *pp*
the more ten - der one of

Vc. *pp*

Pno.

240

Sop.
friend of friend.

Vc.

Pno. *pp*

♩=66

5. My Heart

Andante amabile

Soprano

Cello

Piano

245

Sop.

Vc.

Pno.

mp

Should I draw you the

248

Sop. pic - ture of my Heart,

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

250

Sop. *mf* It would

Vc. *mf* 3

Pno. *mf*

252

Sop. be what I hope you still would Love

Vc. *mp* 3

Pno. *mp*

255

Sop. *mp* *mf*
Though it con - tain - no - thing - Though it con -

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

258

Sop.
tained no - thing new. I have seen a score of years

Vc.

Pno.

261

Sop.
I have seen a score of years roll o - ver our

Vc.

Pno.

263 *mp*

Sop. Heads, nor have the

Vc. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

265

Sop. years - - - of ab - sence ef - faced from my

Vc.

Pno.

267

Sop. mind

Vc.

Pno.

269

Sop. 
 nor have the years ef - faced from my mind

Vc. 
 3

Pno. 

272

Sop. 
 the Im - mage of

Vc. 
 3

Pno. 

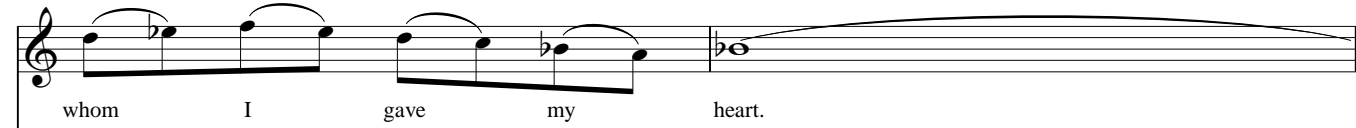
275

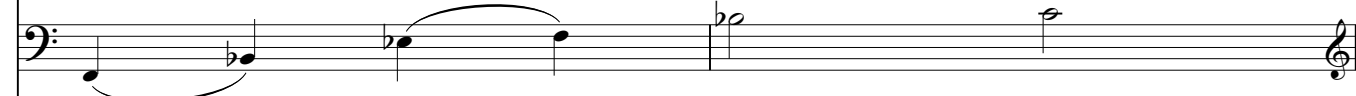
Sop. 
 the dear un - tit - led Man to

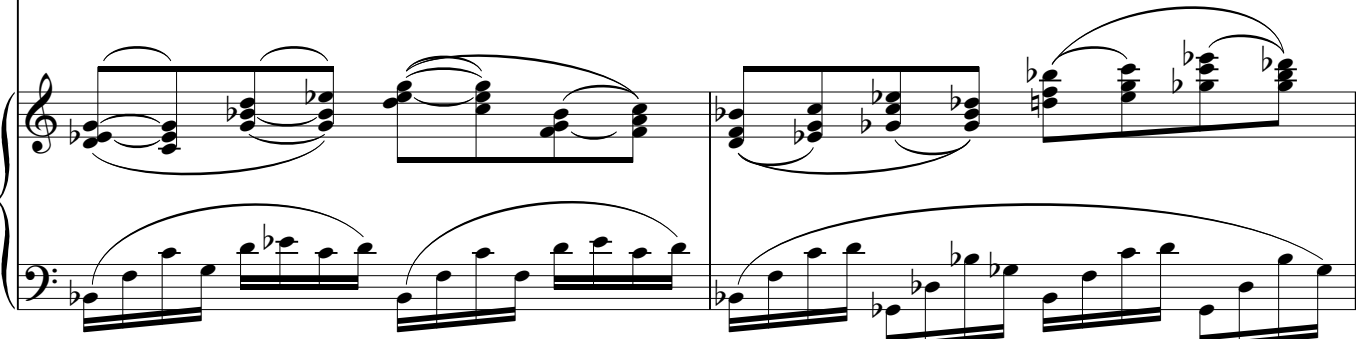
Vc. 
 3

Pno. 

277

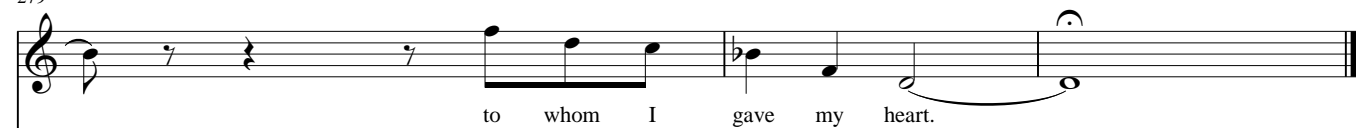
Sop.  whom I gave my heart.


Vc. 

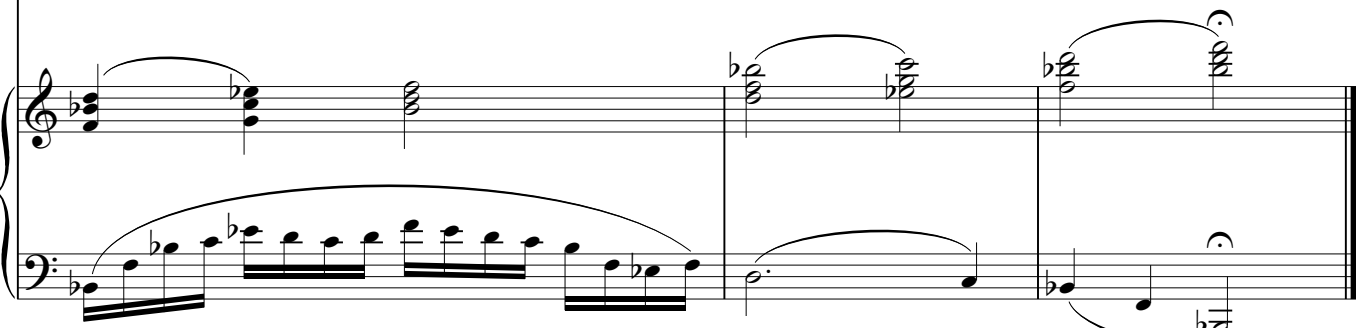
Pno. 

rit.

279

Sop.  to whom I gave my heart.

Vc. 

Pno. 

12'32"