3 New Hampshire Songs

mixed choir
16 parts

I. Litany (R.S.A. 161:2, IV)
II. Proposition (3 verbs and a logical operator)
III. Doggerel (four voice canon #12)

Larry Polansky
1999
3 New Hampshire Songs

The 3 New Hampshire Songs are based on (mostly) indigenous New Hampshire texts. My family and I have lived in New Hampshire for close to 10 years now, and these pieces are a kind of meditation on home.

Each is dedicated to fellow New Hampshirites who have enriched our lives in this remarkable, interesting, and contradictory state. I often say that much of American music (at least my own) is about place. These pieces are explicitly about the possibilities of place, dedicated to others who see those possibilities in new ways.

Each song is based on a text, emblematic of our state in some way. The Shaker "abcdarius" is not originally from New Hampshire (nor is it actually a Shaker text), but Shaker culture and music (through Shaker music expert Mary Ann Haagen and our friends in the Shaker family at Sabbathday Lake) have wonderfully permeated our lives in recent years, and I wanted to set this text to music (as have many others). Whether it is one of the most beautiful or nonsensical of American poems ("angleworm dog"?), it is used here with the deepest affection and respect for the culture and music it represents. The subtitle was inspired by my brother, Steven Polansky, a writer, who once told me, after I played him a recording of the Seeger family singing this poem, that he often used it to teach his poetry class, as an example of "pure doggerel."

Proposition takes its text from our famous licentious slogan, in all its potential for confusion.

Litany is an unedited setting of the text of a form which, by law, until a few months ago, prospective adoptive families were made to sign. My wife and I, with great discomfort, signed this document. One couple we know (Kate Soule and John McDermott), also signed it. After the law was repealed they asked for their copy back and ceremoniously burned it. Similarly, this piece is my response.

All three songs use only pitches derived from the first 17 harmonics of a fundamental: D for Proposition, E for Doggerel, and F for Litany. The pieces should all be sung in the intonation of the harmonic series, as follows (using the series on D as a prototype):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harmonic #</th>
<th>Pitch (<em>Proposition</em>)</th>
<th>Pitch (<em>Doggerel, Litany</em>)</th>
<th>Cents Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 16</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>(E, F)</td>
<td>0¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3, 6, 12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>(B, C)</td>
<td>+2¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5, 10</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>(G#, A)</td>
<td>-14¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>(F#, G)</td>
<td>+4¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>(D#, E)</td>
<td>-12¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7, 14</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>(D, Eb)</td>
<td>-31¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ab</td>
<td>(B, Bb)</td>
<td>-49¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>(C, Db)</td>
<td>+41¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>D#</td>
<td>(F, F#)</td>
<td>+5¢</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These pieces were premiered by the York Vocal Index, York, England, under the direction of William Brooks, in June, 2003. I am grateful for a number of suggestions made by those musicians which have been incorporated into the score. In that performance, the fundamental of all pieces was made the same (A), and in *Proposition*, separate clicktracks (through headphones) were given to each performer.

Larry Polansky  
Lebanon, Fall, 1999  
(rev. 8/20/03)
I. Litany (R.S.A. 161:2, IV)
for Walter and Liz Sinnott-Armstrong

For 16 or more voices. In Section I, each voice sings only one pitch, designated by the first "measure" (not sung) in which the 16 harmonic pitches are distributed for the 16 voices. The singers should divide up these pitches according to their most comfortable range. In Section I, each voice (except the lowest) moves gradually from an indefinitely tuned pitch somewhere close the target pitch (x-noteheads) to the target pitch (ordinary notehead). A slight crescendo (almost an accent) should accompany the arrival on the target pitch. All lyrics are in unison. Vibrato should be little or not at all. In general, definite pitches should be a dynamic level or two louder than indefinite pitches. The idea is of a noisy harmonic series gradually refining itself.

In Section II, a continuous, monophonic melody should "move through" the choir as indicated in the score. Singers should join in, unobtrusively, when they can sing a pitch, and some simple mechanism should be devised by the singers so that the legato effect indicated in the score is achieved (perhaps by physical position in the choir). Higher voices may begin a bit lower to ensure greater clarity of words.

Section III should be sung by those who can sing the notes (the designation "men" and "women" is for convenience only).

There can be a slight pause between each section. Care should be taken throughout to make the words as clearly understood as possible.

All tunings are based on the harmonic series on F (see chart in introduction).
II. Proposition (3 verbs and a logical operator)  
for Jack and Ann Wilson

For nine or more voices. Each voice sings only one pitch. Although voices are designated soprano, alto, tenor, bass, they may be sung by anyone who can sing the one pitch in the part. There may be more than one singer to a part, but the nine parts should be of roughly equal loudness.

The "quarter note" is used throughout as a common pulse, and all grupetti relate to it. Thus, all grupetti (even the small ones, like 7, 5, 3, and 2) are $n$ quarters in the time of 8 quarters (for the measure). Stems and grupetti brackets are dropped after a few measures in each part. The only exception is the low bass part (D), which is always a whole note, or two per measure (with the first whole note rest omitted in the last few measures).

When each voice has been reduced to one note, that note is the "middle" of the grupetto. Although this is rhythmically difficult, care should be taken that the natural, superparticular accelerando up the harmonic series is observed. In other words, 13 is closer rhythmically to 12 than 12 is to 11, and so on. All these pitches come after the middle of the measure.

All notes are more or less legato, held almost to the next note or rest.

All tunings are based on the harmonic series on D (see chart in introduction).
III. Doggerel (four voice canon #12)
for Mary Ann Haagen and Charlie DePuy

Each part consists of four pitches from the harmonic series on E (2-16). The piece may be sung in one of two ways:

- in hocket fashion (one voice to a note, for a total of 16 voices)
- the entire section singing all of the pitches in the part

As in I. and II., pitches are tuned to the harmonic series (this time on E). Pitches may be distributed among the voices in the most comfortable way. For example, since the bass and tenor parts are a bit high (owing to the natural spacing of the harmonic series), altos may sing the top tenor note(s), tenors, the top bass note.

The score consists of four individual parts, sung at four different tempi, related as 7:6:5:4. In other words, if the bass part (the longest) is sung at mm. 60, the tenor, alto, and soprano parts are at mm. 75, 90, and 105, respectively. A system of synchronized click tracks may be used, or better, individual conductors who are part of the choir. The conductors conduct 5 against 4, 6 against 4, and 7 against 4 with reference to the conductor of the bass part.

All parts should end precisely together. Tenor, alto and soprano parts start successively later in the bass part, proportionate to their tempo. In other words, since the tenor part's tempo is 5/4ths of the bass part, it begins on beat 22. The alto and soprano parts begin on beats 36 and 46 of the bass part, respectively.

A tempo between mm. 50 and 60 is suggested for the bass part. At mm. 60, the bass part lasts 1:45, tenor 1:30, alto 1:40, and soprano 1:00. The tenor, alto and soprano parts lasts 84, 70, and 60 beats of the bass part, respectively.

Upper case words should be accented slightly. All tunings are based on the harmonic series on E (see chart in introduction). Depending on the specific ranges and strengths of the singers, the fundamental for the entire piece may be moved up or down (putting the entire work in a different “key”).

(Thanks to William Brooks for the first performance of the piece, and for valuable assistance with the score).
I. Litany
(R.S.A. 161:2, IV)
x means sing "around" the pitch, softly, in no particular intonation. As the "x"s turn to noteheads, focus in on exact pitches.

The division of Children and Youth Services is prohibited by RSA one hundred and

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

\[ \text{pp (crescendo gradually to measure 6)} \]

N.B. Small hairpins apply to the individual voice changes from rough to accurate pitches.
sixty one colon two Roman numeral IV from granting a license to any Foster Family Home in which one
or more of the adults is homosexual. Homosexuals are also prohibited from adopting.

Sing parts of the melody when pitches enter your range. By alternating voices, sometimes hold those pitches for several beats, overlapping with the next few notes, like a sustain pedal. Let pitches die out gradually over the course of 2–3 beats, or even a whole measure. There should always be at least 2–3 notes sounding with the current melody note the loudest. The effect should be like a moving filter. The melody and words should be clear and continuous.

Homosexual as defined by the statute means any person who knowingly and voluntarily
performs or submits to any sexual act involving the sex organs of one person and the mouth

or anus of another person of the same gender (unquote) (parenthesis) R. S. A. one hundred and sixty-one colon two Roman numeral IV as amended by the nineteen eighty-seven regular session. (close parenthesis).

III. free tempo, a little louder, strong

Speak your name, free rhythm, on your pitch.

pause, then

in unison, on your pitch, say the date, in some simple, agreed upon way.

let chords ring, die out gently
II. Proposition
(3 verbs and a logical operator)
for jack and ann wilson

Proposition

three verbs and a logical operator

Larry Polonsky
(soften slightly to end)

S1
live free or
live
live
live

S2
and live fee
die and
live
live
live
live

A1
free not live
die free
not
live
live
live

A2
live or die
free live
die
free
die

T1
live free live
nor live
free
die
live
live

T2, 3
live free or
die live
free
die
live
live

B1, 2

mp-mf

lp. 2/6/06

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III. Doggerel
(four voice canon #12)
for mary ann haagen and charlie depuy

Doggerel

four voice canon #12

(bass begins piece)

Larry Polansky

\( \text{\textit{L. 50 - 60}} \)

\( \text{\textit{pp}} \)

\( \text{\textit{ff}} \)

\( \text{\textit{p}} \)

AL-LI-GA-TOR  Beetle  Por-ce-pine  Whale  BO-BOLINK  Pan-ther  Drag-on-fly  Snail

CROC-O-DILE  Mon-ky  Buf-fa-lo  Hare  DROM-E-DAR-Y  Leo-pard  Mud  Turtle  Bear  EL-E-PHANT  Bad-ger  Pe-li-can  Ox


IBEX  Rhin-o-cor-os  Owl  Kan-ga-roo  JAC-KAL  Opos-sum  Toad  Cock-a-too  KING-FISH-ER  Pea-cock  Ant-eater  Bat
LIZARD

ICHEMON

HONEY-BEE

RAT

MOCKINGBIRD

CAMEL

GRASSHOPPER

MOUSE

NIGHT-INGALE

SPIDER

CUTTLEFISH

GROUSE

(each voice sustains its pitch)

OCELOT

PHEASANT

WOLVERINE

AUK

PERIWINKLE

ERMINE

KATYDID

HAWK

QUAIL

HIPPOPOTAMUS

ARMADILLO

MOTH

RATTLE SNAKE

LION

WOODPECKER

SLOTH

SALAMANDER

GOLDFINCH

ANGLEWORM

DOG

TIGER

FLAMINGO

SCORPION

PROG

UNICORN

OSTRICH

NAUTILUS

MOLE

VIPER

GORILLA

BASILISK

SOLE

WHIPPOORWILL

BEAVER

CENTIPEDE

FAWN

XANTHOS

CANAAN

POLIWOOG

SWAN

YELLOWHAMMER

EAGLE

HYENA

LARK

ZEBRA

CHAMELEON

BUTTERFLY

SHARK

rev 2/5/06
for Mary Ann Haagen and Charlie Depuy

Doggerel

four voice canon #12

(Tenor begins on beat 22 of the bass part)

(Lyric: 5/4 * bass part tempo)

Tenor

AL-IGATOR Beetle Porcupine Whale BO-BO-LINK Panther Dragonfly Snail

CROCODILE Monkey Buffalo Hare DROMEDARY Leopard Mud Turtle Bear

ELEPHANT Budger Pelican Ox FLYING FISH Reindeer Anaconda Fox

GUINEA PIG Dolphin Antelope Goose HUMMINGBIRD Weasel Flicker el Moose

IBEX Rhinoceros Owl Kangaroo JAC-KAL Opossum Toad Cockatoo
KING-FISHER Peacock Ant-eater Bat LIZARD Ichneumon Honey-bee Rat MOCKING-BIRD Camel Grass-hopper Mouse

(Neath voice sustains its pitch)

NIGHTINGALE Spider Cuttlefish Grouse OCELOT Pheasant Wolverine Auk PERLWINKLE Ermine Katydid Hawk

QUAIL Hippopotamus Armadillo Moth RATTLE SNAKE Lion Woodpecker Sloth

SALAMANDER Goldfinch Angleworm Dog TIGER Flamingo Scorpion Frog

UNICORN Ostrich Nautilus Mole VIPER Gorilla Basilisk Sole WHIPPOREWILL Beaver Centipede Fawn

XANTHOS Canary Polliwog Swan YELLOW HAMMER Eagle Hyena Lark ZEBRA CHAMELEON Butterfly Shark

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rev 2/5/06
for mary ann haagen and charlie deput

Doggerel

four voice canon #12

(Larry Polansky)

(Alto begins on beat 3c of the bass part)

\(3/2\) bass part tempo

Alto

\[\text{AL-LI-GATOR} \quad \text{Boo-tyle} \quad \text{Por-cu-pine} \quad \text{Whale} \quad \text{BO-BO-LINK} \quad \text{Pan-ther} \quad \text{Drag-on-fly} \quad \text{Snail}\]

\[\text{CROC-O-DILE} \quad \text{Non-key} \quad \text{Buffa-lo Hare} \quad \text{DROM-E-DAR-Y} \quad \text{Leop-ard} \quad \text{Mud} \quad \text{Turtle} \quad \text{Bear}\]

\[\text{EL-E-PHANT} \quad \text{Bad-ger} \quad \text{Pe-li-can} \quad \text{Ox} \quad \text{FLY-ING FISH} \quad \text{Rein-deer} \quad \text{An-a-con-da} \quad \text{Fox}\]

\[\text{GUI-NEA-PIG} \quad \text{Dol-phin} \quad \text{An-te-lope} \quad \text{Goose} \quad \text{HUM-MING-BIRD} \quad \text{Wea-sel} \quad \text{Pick-er-el} \quad \text{Moose}\]

\[\text{I-BEX} \quad \text{Rhi-ne-cer-os} \quad \text{Owl} \quad \text{Kang-a-roo} \quad \text{JAC-KAL} \quad \text{O-pos-sum} \quad \text{Toad} \quad \text{Cock-a-too}\]
for mary ann haagen and charlie deput

Doggerel

four voice canon #12

(Soprano begins on beat 46 of the bass part)
KING - FISH - ER Pea - cock Ant - eat - er Bat LI - ZARD Ich - neu - mon Hon - ey - bee Rat MOCK - ING - BIRD Ca - mel Grass - hop - per Mouse (mp)

NIGHT - IN - Gale Spi - der Cut - tle - fish Grouse O - CE - LCT Phe - sa - nt Wol - ver - ine Auk PER - I - WIN - KLE Er - mine Ka - ty - did Hawk

QUAIL Hip - po - po - ta - mus Ar - ma - dil - lo Moth RAT - TLE - SNAKE Li - on Wood - pee - ker Sloth SA - LA - MAN - DEE Gold - finch An - gle - worm Dog

TI - GER Flamin - go Scor - pi - on Frog U - NI - CORN Os - trich Na - tu - lius Mole VI - PER Gor - il - la Ba - si - lisk Sole

WHIP - POR - WILL Beav - er Cen - ti - pede Fawn XAN - THOS Ca - na - ry Pol - li - wog Swan

YEL - low - HAM - MER Eagle Hy - e - na Lark ZEB - RA Cha - me - leon But - ter - fly Shark

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