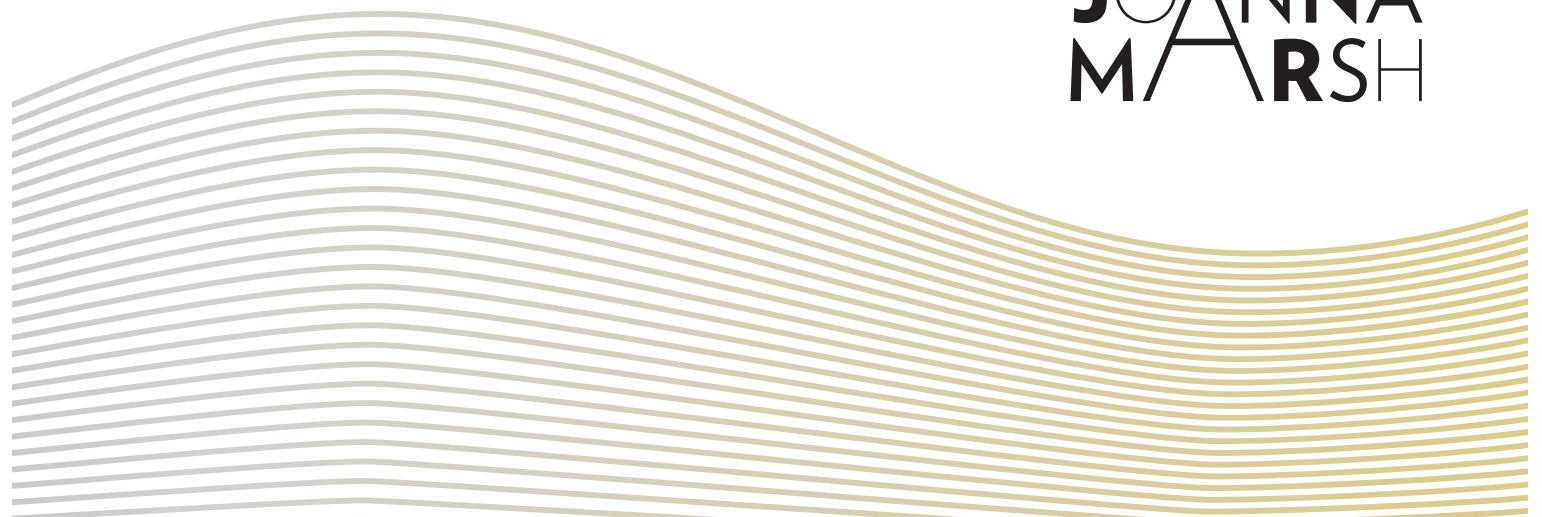


Joanna Marsh

Arabesques

mixed voices unaccompanied
(A, A, T, Bar, Bar, B)

JOANNA
MARSH



Joanna Marsh

Arabesques (2012)

mixed voices unaccompanied
(A, A, T, Bar, Bar, B)

Total duration c.13'

ISMN 979-0-9002355-4-1

© 2012 Joanna Marsh
www.joannamarsh.co.uk

Arabesques

A commission for the Kings Singers, Arabesques are settings of four short but highly evocative poems by contemporary male Arab poets. Each tells the story of a woman they have known: 'A Woman', remembers a passionate encounter, 'You want', muses on her acquisitiveness, 'Fading', observes her aging, 'Seeds in Flight', finds rebirth after her death. 'Fading' was premiered at the London A Cappella Festival, on 29th January 2015. 'A Woman', and 'Seeds in Flight', were premiered at The American School in Doha, on May 7th 2015. The pieces were revised in November 2015 and the fourth piece 'You want' added to the set.

1. A Woman

How will I drag my feet to her now?
In which land will I see her,
And on which street of what city
Should I ask about her?
And if I find her house,
Let's say I do,
Will I ring the bell?
How should I answer?
And how will I stare at her face
As I touch the light wine
Seeping between her fingers.
How should I say hello...
And how will I take the pain
Of all these years?
Once twenty years ago,
In an air-conditioned train,
I kissed her all night through...

Sa'adi Youssef b.1934 Iraq

2. You want

You want, like all women,
Solomon's treasure.
You want pools of perfume,
Combs of ivory.
You want a horde of slaves.
Sharazad, like all women want.
You want me to give you
The stars, the heav'ns.
You want me to give you
The stars in the heav'ns

Nazir Kabbani 1923-1998 Syria

3. Fading

Imagine where this dove will go;
Imagine when her wings turn grey,
When her call grows old.

Will she turn to the mirrors of young sparrows
Who slide into delusion?
Or will a deaf sparrow offer her
A perch to sing?
How will she apologise to a traveller
Wanting to stroke her feathers
When the flock scatters?
How will she strut through the courtyard
Or impress the grass?
Will she look for a kind boy to grind her
A grain of wheat,
Or an old flame to relight aging passions?
Perhaps she will divide her sadness
Between a window and a metal cage.
Perhaps she'll become a professional mourner
At the funerals of birds.
Imagine where this dove will go
When the trees donate their lowest branch.
Imagine when neighbours
Are indifferent to her past, fading.

Abboud al Jabiri b.1963 Iraq

4. Seeds in Flight

An ancient woman, who has lived all seasons,
Wanders the earth gathering camomile.
Each flower in her apron is a star,
Her apron is the sky.
When she reaches the house,
She strews them to dry
Like shells on a beach –
To bring good luck,
To whisper the future.
In the sun her tattoo glistens,
A star glints in her golden earring,
The camomile dries.
Her hand, hennaed with God's names,
Spun the wool of the flock,
Embroidered the wedding clothes,
Gathered the dried flowers.
But next season, when the future arrived,
It silenced the whispers.
She was buried with her ancestors.
And yet as if by chance,
As if by magic,
As if by a miracle
The camomile grows each season.
Many seeds have flown.
These seeds remain.

Khaled Abdallah b.1970 Gaza

Arabesques

1. A WOMAN

Sa'adi Youssef
b.1934 Iraq

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = 98$

ALTO 1

ALTO 2 *mf sost.*
How will I drag my feet to her

TENOR *mp*
How will I _____ drag my feet to her

BARITONE 1 *mp*
Drag my feet to her

BARITONE 2 *mp*
How will I _____

BASS

5 *più f*
How will I drag my feet to her

mf
now? How will I drag my feet to her

mf *dolce*
now, _____ to _____ her now? How will I drag my feet to her

mf
now? How will I dra - (a)g my feet to her

now, to her now? How will feet to her

mf
now, to her now? How will feet to her

mf *sost.*

now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mf *sost.*

now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mp *mf* *sost.*

now to her now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mp *mf* *sost.*

now to her now? In which land and on which street of

mp *mf* *sost.*

now, to her now? In which land will I see her, and on which street

mp *mf* *sost.*

now, to her now? In which land which street

14 *sost.* *mp*

what ci - ty _____ should I ask a - bout her? _____

what ci - ty _____

what ci - ty _____ a - bout her _____ if I find _____

p

sost. *mp* *mf* *sost.*

what ci - ty _____ should I ask a - bout her? _____ And if I

p

a - bout her _____ if I find _____

mp

what an (n)

19

19

mf *sost.* *mf*

find her house ___ ring the bell? ___

mp *p*

___ her house and ___ will I ring ___ the bell, ring ___

mf *mp*

find let's say ___ I do, will I ring ring the bell? ___

p

___ her house and ___ will I ring ___ the bell, ring ___

mf *mp*

let's say ___ I do ring the bell? ___

24

24

mp *f* *sost.*

How would I an - swer? How should I an - swer

mp *mf* *f* *sost.*

How would I an - swer? How should I an - swer ___ and how will I

mp *f*

How would I and how

mp

___ would I an - swer? How should I an - swer ___ and how will I

p *mf* *f*

How would I an - swer how will I

___ would I an - swer?

$$mf$$

rit.

tenderly

stare at her touch

rit.

Poco meno mosso ♩ = 92

seep - ing, seep - ing

Tempo I ♩ = 98

37

mf rit.

fin - gers? ____

mf

'tween her fin - gers? ____

mp *p*

fin - gers? should I ____

mp *p*

be - tween her ____ fin - gers? ____ How should I, ____

mp *mf sost.*

be - tween her ____ fin - gers? ____ How

mp

'tween her fin - gers? ____

42

mf legato

and

mf sost.

How should ____ I say, ____ hel - lo and

mf

how should I ____ should say, hel - lo and how will

how should how should I say and how ____

should I say, should say hel - lo

mf

hel - lo

will I take the pain

p *f*

how will I take I take the pain, I take the pain

p *f*

how will, how will, how will I take the pain

mp

these years? Once

of all these years? Once

51 *f* *mf*

twen - ty years a - go, I kissed her

twen - ty years a - go in an air - con - di - tioned train

a - go, air - con - di - tioned train I kissed her

a - go in an air - con - di - tioned train

twen - ty years a - go, I kissed her

in an air - con - di - tioned train I kissed her

56 *mp* *rit.* *dim.* *p*

all the night through, the night, _____ the night through. _____

mf *mp* *dim.* *p*

all the night through, the night, _____ the night through. _____

mf dim. *mp* *dim.* *p*

through, _____ all _____ the night through. _____

mf *mp dim.*

all the night through, the night, _____ the night.

all the night through. _____

all the night through. _____

2. YOU WANT

Nazir Kabbani
1923–1998 Syria

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = 120$
ad lib. first two beats

mf

ALTO 1
You, you you

mf

ALTO 2
You, you you

mf

TENOR
You want, you want, you want, you

mf

BARITONE 1
You want, you want, you want, you

mf

BARITONE 2
You want, you want, you want, you

mf

BASS
You want, you want, you want, you

4

you you like all wo - men

you you like all wo - men

want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

8

mf trea - sure trea - sure

f want, So - lo - mon's *mf* trea - sure trea - sure

f want, So - lo - mon's *mf* trea - sure you

8 want, You want, you want, trea - sure you

mf want, You want, you want, trea - sure

8 want, You want, you want, you

11

mp So - - - lo - mon's *f* trea -

f So - - - lo - mon's trea -

mf want So - lo - mon's *f* you want, you

mf want So - lo - mon's So - lo - mon's *f* you want, you

mf So - - - lo - mon's *f* you want, you

mf want, So - lo - mon's *f* you want, you

sub. *mp*

- sure, _____ trea - sure like all wo - men

- sure, _____ trea - sure.

sub. *mp*

8 want, _____ trea - sure all wo - men

f

sub. *mp*

want, you — want _____ like all wo - men.

sub. *mp*

want, _____ trea - sure like all wo - men.

sub. *mp*

want, _____ trea - sure all _____

a tempo

19 *p* _____ *mp* _____

want. _____

mp _____ *p* _____

You want you want you want you want you want — you want you want you

p _____ *mp* _____

8 want. _____

mf

Pools of per - fume

22

mp You —

mf want combs of i - vo - ry — *mp* you —

p combs of you want you want you want — *mf* you want a horde

mp you want you want you want — *mf* you want a horde

mp *lilting* combs — of i - vo - ry — *sub. mp* you want

mp *lilting* combs — of a horde — *mf*

25

want, you — want, a horde of slaves —

want, you — want, a horde of slaves —

mf a horde — of — slaves —

mp you want you want, slaves — you want you want — *p*

you want you want, a horde of — slaves — want —

a horde — of — slaves

molto rall.

mf *mp*

per - fume _____ a

mp *mf* *mp*

pools of per - fume _____ i - vo - ry, _____ a

mp

combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

p *mp*

_____ you want you want _____ you want _____ combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

p *mp*

pools _____ of per - fume _____ combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

mp

combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

34 *mf* *mp*

horde of slaves. _____ Sha - ha - ra - zad, _____

mf *mp*

horde of slaves _____ Sha - ha - ra - zad, _____

mf

horde of slaves _____

mf *mp* <

horde of slaves _____ like

mf *mp* <

horde of slaves _____ like

mf

horde of slaves _____

39 *p* *p*

Sha - ha - ra - zad, Sha -

p *mf* *p*

Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha -

p *mf* *p*

like all wo - men! Sha -

p *mf* *p*

all wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha -

p *mf* *p*

all wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha -

p *mf* *mp*

Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha -

43 *mf* *p*

- ha - ra - zad, wo - men want like

mf *p*

- ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf *p*

- ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf *p*

- ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf *p*

- ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men, want like

mf *p*

- ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

46 *mf* *sub. p* *f* *With a swagger*

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to give _____

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to

all wo - men want, _____ You want to

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to

all wo - men want, _____ You want me

all wo - men _____ me

50

— you the stars _____ in the heav'ns, — you want me

give you the stars in the heav'ns, — you want me to

give the stars the heav'ns, —

give you the stars the heav'ns, — you want me to

you the the heav'ns to

you the the heav'ns to

Broader

54

mf *f*

the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

mf *f*

give you _____ the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

mf *f*

the stars _____ in the heav'ns. _____ You want me to give _

mf *f*

give you the stars _____ heav'ns. _____ You want me to give _

mf *f*

give you the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You _ want me to give _

f

give you _____ to give _

58

molto rit. *p*

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - - vens.

p

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - - vens.

p

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - - vens.

p

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - - vens.

p

— you the stars _____ in the vens.

p

— you the stars _____ in the

3. FADING

Abboud al Jabiri
b.1963 Iraq

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = c.92$

ALTO 1 *mp* Where this

ALTO 2 *mp* mm dove

TENOR *seamless mp* *sim.* I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

BARITONE 1 *seamless mp* *sim.* I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

BARITONE 2

BASS

5

dove will go; when her *p cresc.*

go, o, o; when *p cresc.*

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

airy sigh p *mp* (ahhh) fad - ing (ng)

p *mp* fad - ing (ng)

9

wings turn grey, — when her call grows old. —

wings turn grey, — when her call grows old. —

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine old. —

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine.

mp — *mf* —

fad - ing (ng) i - ma - gine, i -

mp — *mf* —

fad - ing (ng)

13 *mp* *sost.*

— Will she turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp

— Will she turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp

Will — turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp

Will she — turn who

mp

- ma - gine mir - rors young spar - rows

mp

young spar - rows —