

A Jelly-Fish

Duo for Soprano and Flute

[~5'50"]

by

Connor Simpson

(2026)



M E R E F L Y P R E S S

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A Jelly-Fish

Duo for Soprano and Flute

2026

circa 5 minutes 50 seconds

Connor Simpson

Mere Fly Press (ASCAP)

Written for Anna Elder and Sarah Steranka of the SydeBoob Duo.

Program Notes

Inspired by Marianne Moore's poem, *A Jelly-Fish* evokes the experience of reaching out to touch a jellyfish, only to watch it shrivel and fade away just as your hand draws near. This fleeting moment mirrors the indescribable nature of poetry, music, and art. When trying to dissect its details, its essence slips away. This piece, explores a reaching, and a longing for song only to dissolve away into the sea.

A Jelly-Fish

by Marianne Moore

Visible, invisible,
A fluctuating charm,
An amber-colored amethyst
Inhabits it; your arm
Approaches, and
It opens and
It closes;
You have meant
To catch it,
And it shrivels;
You abandon
Your intent—
It opens, and it
Closes and you
Reach for it—
The blue
Surrounding it
Grows cloudy, and
It floats away
From you..

Performance Notes

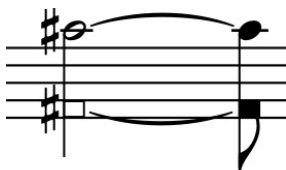
A brief note: the work should always remain soft in dynamic and impression. Unsteady timbres in this quiet dynamic is desired, and while it should not be unnaturally exaggerated, it need not be compensated for. The timbre in both the voice and flute should focus on a more airy, noisy, and colorful tone throughout. Physical motion and facial expression should remain as minimal as possible except during moments of "reaching out" where even still it should be reserved. Spoken text should not be spoken theatrically but inflected as if sharing this tragic dream with a friend.

Soprano

Vibrato should be avoided in static moments with brief moments shining through in the upper register, in these moments the width of the vibrato should still be kept limited. Text in square brackets indicates International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) sounds are available on:

<https://www.internationalphoneticalphabet.org/ipa-sounds/>

Flute



Square note heads represent singing into the flute while playing

Multiphonic Catalogue:

Each multiphonic is given a numeric label, e.g. [4], based on its first occurrence within the piece. e.g. m. 32.

Multiphonics may be substituted if needed based on the player/instrument however, care should be taken to match the dynamic, expression, and tone of the notated multiphonic. Fingerings for harmonics based clearly on the harmonic series (in an octave, fifth or both) e.g. m. 1 are omitted in favor of a diamond notehead below, denoting the fingered pitch.

Fl. [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7]

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains seven measures, each with a diamond notehead below the staff. Above each measure is a numeric label in brackets: [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], and [7]. Each label is followed by a vertical column of seven circles, representing the harmonic series for that multiphonic. A large, faint watermark "Prior Perusal Only" is visible across the page.

Performance Score

A Jelly-Fish

for Sydeboob Duo

Text By: Marianne Moore

Connor Simpson

Drifting, Obscuring, Eroding ♩ = 54 On Tone: Airy, Bare, Unstable

ppp
senza vib.

Soprano

[u] [u] [u] [u]

senza vib.
ppp

Flute

5

S.

[u] [u] [u]

Fl.

9 **pp**

S.

vis - i - ble in - vis - i - ble

Fl.

pp

13

S.

A fluc - tu - a - ting_ charm - [mə]

Fl.

sing and play

16

S. *an am - - ber col - - ored am - e - thyst*

Fl.

19

S. *in - hab - - its it your arm*

Fl.

23

S. *ap - proa - ches and it op - ens_*

Fl.

senza vib. —————>

pp

pp < *p*

26

S. *and it clos - - es you_ have meant to_*

Fl.

p < *pp* *p* < *mp*

pp < *p* *ppp* *pp*

appena vib. —————>

30 *p* spoken, tragically and plainly *ppp* senza vib. *p*

S. catch it— And it shrivels you a - ban -

Fl. [1]

p *pp*

34 *pp* *pp*

S. -don [u] [u] [u]

Fl. [2] [3] *pp*

38 accel. senza vib. *pp*

S. your in - tent it op - ens— and it clos - es—

Fl. [4] *pp* *pp* *p*

..... Longing but Withdrawn ♩ = 63 rit.

p *mp* appena vib. *p*

42 S. — and you reach — for it

Fl. [5]

pp *p*

..... Tempo primo, Stark ♩ = 54

47 S. *pp* *pp* senza vib.

the blue sur - round - ing it —

Fl. *pp* *pp* *ppp*

51 S. *pp* *p* *pp* *p dim.*

grows cloud - y — and it floats —

Fl. [6] [7] *pp* *p* *pp* *p dim.*

55

S. 

a - way [a] [a] —

Fl. 

58 *pppp*

S.  [From you]

[a]

Fl. 

pppp