

ARISTEA MELLOS / from Athena

Mournful

12 $\text{♩} = 72$

T. Solo p mp

I had not known it, but I lived in-side my

Vc. ppp p *Sul A seagull effect* *gliss.*

$\text{♩} = 72$
Funerary & espressivo

Pno. p mp pp mp pp p pp

Red etc..

19

T. Solo p mf p pp

mo-ther's head her face God-like, white, a cast

Vc. *gliss.* pp p mf *pizz.*

Pno. mf p pp mp pp

Red *Red*

25

T. Solo *Violently* mp

Neck coiled in a

Vc. f mf mp *tap side of cello*

Pno. p sfz mp p f pp

Red

*N.B. tremolos in the piano should evoke the sound of a mandolin

29 *f* *ff* *mp* 3

T. Solo snake, re-ady to strike, My own eyes slits be-neath the

Vc. *f* *mf* *mp* (pizz.)

Pno. *mp* *mf* *sfz* *mf* *p*

mp

ped

//

32 *p* *pp* *poco rall.*

T. Solo Quasi Sprechstimme hea - vy chalked lids.

Vc. *p* *pp* *arco* *mp* *pp*

Pno. *p* *pp* *p* *poco rall.*

pp *5* *pp*

ped

Composer's Note:

"Athena," an art song for tenor, violoncello, and piano, was composed in April 2013 as part of the Art Song Lab project in Vancouver. Upon first reading the poem, I was immediately struck by the musical qualities of the text: its evocative imagery and rhythmic flow. As a composer, I was influenced by the gruesome nature of the poem's narrative, namely, the violent birth of the goddess Athena. In my setting, I tried to capture the dualities apparent in the text—life and death, youth and decay, mourning and celebration—by having two distinct musical sections in the song.

The work opens with a reflective cello solo that hints at the dark nature of the text to come. This first section is dominated by a funerary dance in the piano and a low and mysterious tenor line. As the sense of mystery gives way to pulsing figures and percussive cello techniques, the tenor rises in pitch and volume, reaching a peak at the half-sung, half-shouted line: "fist after fist, to crawl and stretch." With the violent act of Athena's birth complete, the remainder of the song shifts into a gentle, more Romantic focus. A lilting piano figure establishes an ethereal quality, and the music becomes sweeping and almost grand in gesture. As the piano and cello weave contrapuntally around each other, the funerary music from the opening is re-introduced, but shifts in harmony render the material transfigured, so that listeners are left with a strange feeling of familiarity and expectation.

"Athena" was first performed on June 7, 2013 at the Orpheum Annex in Vancouver, B.C., by Will George (tenor), Elinor Frey (violoncello), and Corey Hamm (piano).