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The Mysteries of Jacob
for narrator and clarinet
(2014)

Elizabeth Ogonek

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Program Note

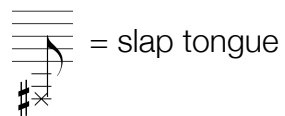
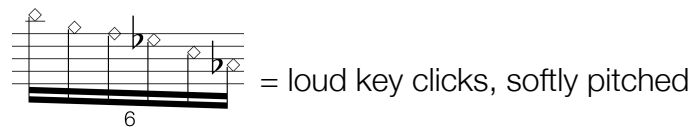
Excerpted from a full-length play by Jonathan Dubow, *The Mysteries of Jacob* is a short music theater piece for narrator and clarinet that explores the world of an autistic boy, his relationship with his aide and his desperate need to communicate. Jacob, whose severe autism inhibits him from verbally communicating, relies on the assistance of his aide as he types on his Lightwriter, a text-to-speech device.

Performance Note

The narration in *The Mysteries of Jacob* is notated in three different ways.

- 1) In episodes 1,2 and 5, the text is grouped by dotted barlines which indicate subphrases. The narration is to be spoken freely within the given phrase.
- 2) In episode 3, the text is meant to function percussively. The placement of the x-noteheads on the staff shows the contour of the words as they are to be performed.
- 3) Episode 8 is a combination of the previous two methods. While the narration is notated evenly, it is to be spoken as naturally as possible. The purpose of assigning rhythmic values to the text is to show that the word "word(s)" always occurs at the same time as a clarinet attack.

*It should be noted that while many of the narrated lines are Jacob speaking, they are intended to be representations of his words. Therefore, one should not adapt the character of an autistic person, nor should one attempt to reproduce the digitalized voice from the Lightwriter. A natural, animated delivery will elucidate the peculiarities of the text and expose the complexities of Jacob's character.



M = multiphonic

written for exploreensemble

The Mysteries of Jacob

for narrator and clarinet
(2014)

Text by Jonathan Dubow
1. **Jacob** | Freely, ♩ = ca. 58

Elizabeth Ogonek

Narrator

Every other second Great Affliction. Lucky never sit with this. What makes them lucky.

Sings, grab until you cannot breathe. & exists! when all now to exist is cry.

B♭ Clarinet

During eucalyptus breath, sings, will grab your throat and kill you.

& exists!

Exists now dangerous Jacob. Hating breath sings.

N.

Sings, grab until you cannot breathe. Exists now Jacob hating earth. Asks, *Jacob this is important we need to know the truth.*

Sings, to know the truth incredible.

Asks, *Did you lie?* Sings what is true.

N.

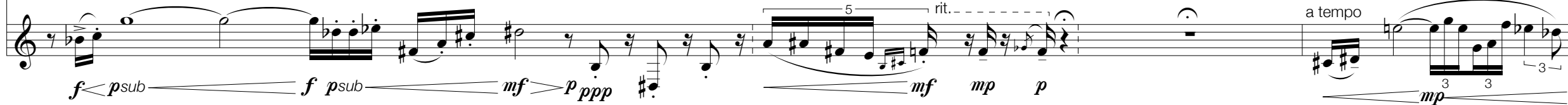
Sings, lie with great pain.

Asks, *Jacob what is true?* Jacob, what is true.

B♭ cl.

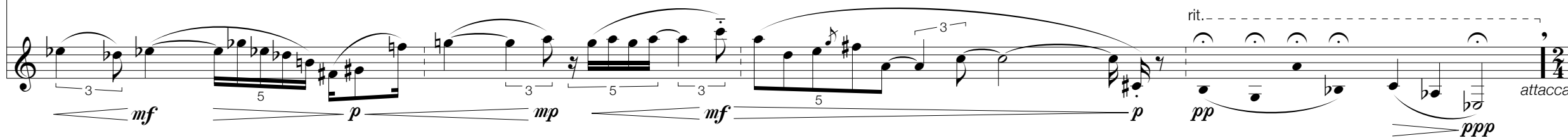
2. Aide ♩ = ca. 80

N. 

B♭ cl. 
f < *p*_{sub} ————— *f* *p*_{sub} ————— *mf* > *p* *ppp* ————— *mf* *mp* *p* ————— *mp*

The most important thing to know about Jacob is that his mind is isolated from his body.

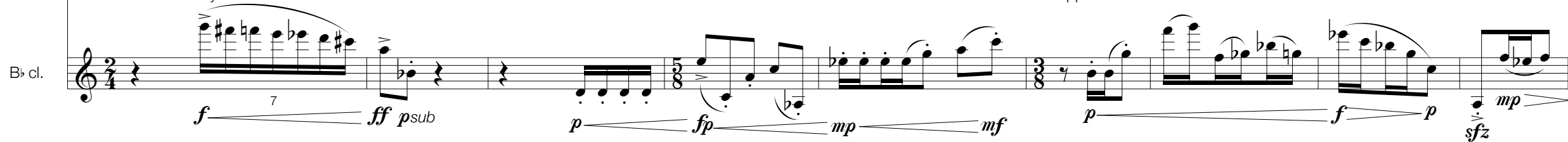
N. 

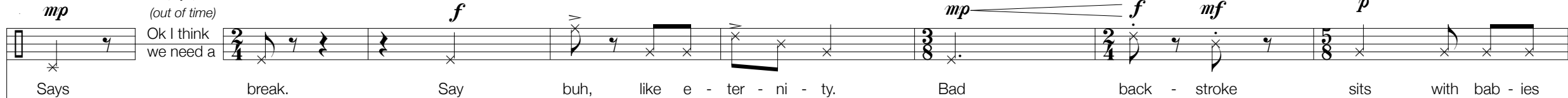
B♭ cl. 
mf ————— *p* ————— *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *p* ————— *pp* ————— *ppp*

Many children describe feeling imprisoned in a body that will not respond to the impulses and desires of their minds, rendering them silent.

3. Jacob ♩ = ca. 120, ♪ = ♪ throughout

N. 
Say buh I know it's hard. Sits with bab - ies trapped in cribs.

B♭ cl. 
f ————— *ff* *p*_{sub} ————— *p* ————— *fp* ————— *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *p* ————— *f* ————— *p* ————— *mp* ————— *sfz*

N. 
mp (out of time) Says break. Say buh, like e - ter - ni - ty. Bad back - stroke sits with bab - ies

B♭ cl. 
p ————— *p* ————— *f* ————— *p* ————— *mf* ————— *pp*

trapped in cribs. Say buh. Bad back - stroke turns him freak, bad - ly beg for bass and bray

freak. Says, Bee say

bee say buh say buh. Bad back - stroke sits with beast - ly bod - y, bet-ter burn.

Says, Bee say bee, bee. Say bee. Bad - ly beg for bass but bray freak. Says, Bee say

bee. Say Bee say bee. Says, bee say bee say bee. like e - ter - ni - ty.

mp *mf* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f* *p* *ff* *sfz* *p* *sfz* *f* *mp* *ff* *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *mp* *p* *fp* *mf* *f* *p* *ff* *p* *pp* *f* *fff* *ppp* *pp*

tr *gl.* *slap tongue* *filtr.*

3 7 5 7

4. Interlude I | Freely, ♩ = ca. 58

B $\flat$ cl.

pp *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *ppp* *ppp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *mp* *p*

B $\flat$ cl.

pp *mp* *mf* *mp* *pp* *mp*

B $\flat$ cl.

accel. rit. a tempo

f *p* *pp* *ff*

5. Jacob | ♩ = ca. 80

N.

Aide closes his pulse to Jacob. But must hear great quiet Jacob. Worst pain than shame, aide does not say, & eyes go.

B $\flat$ cl.

p *mp* *p* *mf* *f* *pp*

N.

Aide does not say & is pushed away. Aide hates Jacob. The voice said you will help & clenched Jacob

B $\flat$ cl.

timbral trill *tr* *f* *pp* *ppp* *f* *p*

N. worst pain than shame. What is wrong with you to - day? & Jacob sings, hear great quiet Jacob.

B♭ cl. *tr* *ff* *fff* *ppp* *p* *p* *pp* *ppp*

N. Clenched Jacob & clenched Jacob does not say. Quieter as puddle turning dry. & sings, a mosquito bites Jacob heart.

B♭ cl. *p_{sub}* *pp* *mp* *p* *ppp*

6. **Aide** He tells me he hates that he can never go out with his friends alone.

 He tells me he wants to go for a walk by himself.

 He tells me he wants to know whether or not he is smiling.

 He tells me he has ESP when I hold his arm, that I close myself to him when I am full of stress.

 He tells me that I will do great things with my life and he will be autistic forever. And he hates me because of this.

7. Interlude II | Slowly, in own tempo

B♭ cl. *pp* *p* *pp* *mf* *pp*

8. Jacob ♩ = ca. 126

N. Those who do not know ask are Ja - cob words. How your words are her words.

B♭ cl. *ppp* 5 6 7 *p* 5 *pp* 6 *sfz* *p* *sfz* *p* 3 *f*

N. Spring of flesh keep all words. Ask are Ja - cob words teas - es Ja - cob. Believe Jacob please. If your vo - cal cords are

B♭ cl. 6 3 *ppp* *ff* *pp* *p* *mp* *p*sub 6 *pp* *ppp* 5 6 7

N. yours, & her words are her words, ask, are Ja - cob words asks, if Jacob

B♭ cl. 5 3 slap tongue *p* *mp* *sfz* 5 *mp* *p* 3 7 3 *pp* *ff*

9. Aide What does it take to understand Jacob?

♩ = ca. 69

B♭ cl. *pp* 3 5 *mf* 5 3 *mp* *p* = ca. 48 *p* 3 *ppp*

rit. rit.

London January 2014

