

MATTHEW SARGENT

soft song (for solo cello)

*dedicated to Rachel Gawell*

Duration: approx. 9'15"

(2006)




“The rain, it’s tiny pressure on your scalp...” – Frank O’Hara

## Instructions for *soft song*...

- Detune the C string down to Bb.
- All notes\* in the piece should be played with individual decrescendos. The decrescendos should occur fluidly, like waves on a beach—each note receding just before the next note approaches at full volume.

[\* Exceptions to this rule: notes within a crescendo or a notated decrescendo, or any note with an underlined dynamic marking (*mp*)]

- All notes with long durations should be played on single bowstrokes.
- The use of varied system lengths is meant to give indications of phrasing, not to suggest proportional notation. Furthermore, blank space following each stanza is not meant to indicate silence – continue to the next stanza without a pause (except where otherwise notated).
- *Slow glissando* indicates a gradual slide that begins at the striking of the note and moves linearly for the entire duration. (Glissandos without the *slow* indication should be played with a more quickly sweeping curve.)
- *Bow over fingerboard* indicates that the player should bow even higher up the fingerboard than their usual *sul tasto*.
-  indicates that the given note is raised by a quarter step.
- Natural harmonics are all written at their sounding intervals. The recurring F natural harmonic is played on the lowest string (which is detuned to Bb).

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Matthew Sargent  
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(Scordatura: Bb, G, D, A)

♩ = 35-40

musical staff 1: Cello part with dynamics and articulation. Dynamics include *mp*, *p*, *pp*, and *p*. Articulation includes *sul A* and *sul G*.

musical staff 2: Cello part with glissando and dynamic markings. Dynamics include *mp*, *mf*, *ppp*, and *n*. Articulation includes *Gliss.*, *Slow Gliss.*, *senza vibrato*, and *hum F natural during gliss. in a soft, droning tone*. A note is marked *n\**.

using only one bowstroke, playing as quiet & lightly as needed (simile throughout on all pedaled C#s)

(\* - fade out to nothing; stop bow on string)

musical staff 3: Cello part with dynamics and articulation. Dynamics include *mp*, *pp*, *mp*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*.

musical staff 4: Cello part with dynamics and articulation. Dynamics include *mp*, *pp*, *mp*, *pppp*, *ppp*, and *pppp*. Articulation includes *sul pont*, *sul tasto*, *sul A*, and *sul D*. A note is marked *pppp\**.

*pppp\**  
subito  
(\* like a faint echo)



senza vibrato  
bow over fingerboard

mp p p ppp pp ppp

Slow Glissando

senza vibrato in one very light & slow bowstroke

mp (mp) p ppp n ppp

Slow Gliss.

senza vibrato  
bow over fingerboard

ord. sul tasto

mp mp dd mp p ddd dd ppp

Slow Glissando

sul Bb  
sul G  
V  
\*\*

mf p mp ppp mp

(\*\* A rich, droning bell tone.  
Harmonic applies only to F,  
use vibrato on C natural.)

mf p ppp n ppp

senza vibrato - - - - -  
bow over fingerboard sul tasto bow over fingerboard - - - - - ord.  
Slow Glissando

*p mp ppp < pp > ppp pp < p*

senza vibrato - - - - -  
bow over fingerboard sul tasto bow over fingerboard - - - - - ord.  
Slow Glissando

*p mp ppp < pp > ppp pp < p*

sul pont ord.  
sul tasto

*pppp subito mp pp = n*

*mf p ppp = n*

*mf p ppp = n*

Viol  
*mf* *p* *ppp* *n*

*ppp* *n*

Sept. 13, 2006  
Hartford, CT