

# Philip Armstrong

## Sister Zhen's Sword of Self-Abnegation for amplified violoncello & pre-recorded sounds (2013)

The music, like the cry for freedom of Sister Zhen, asks questions.  
How to show the dignity of a mountain spring when the river downstream is polluted?  
How to remain principled in a watercourse deft of integrity?  
Where to find a water of truth in an ocean of deceit?  
How to know purpose in a void of meaning?  
How to wield the sword in a quest for peace?  
To what degree responsibility for others?  
What price justice and liberty?

The soundtrack utilises a recording made on February 18, 1943  
of Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, China's first lady,  
addressing the US Congress, appealing for aid in the  
Chinese Nationalists' struggle against the oppressive occupiers.

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for amplified violoncello & pre-recorded sounds

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Andante Moderato ♩ = 68

Violoncello

fl. *pp* *p* < > *p* < > nat. *pp* sul pont. *p* < > *p* < >



Vc.

nat. *p* *mf* *pp* 23" 7 ricochet *mp* *mp*

Vc.


fl. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* nat. *f*

Vc.

fl. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* nat. *f*

Vc.

fl. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* nat. *f*



15 fl. *gliss.* *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mp*  $\leftarrow$  *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mp*  $\leftarrow$

from a wise old poet

nat. *f* *mp*

5 5



1'08" **19** Andante ♩ = 80

18 Vc. *mp*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *ff*

21 Vc. *mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *ff* *pp*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f* *pp*  $\leftarrow$  *f* *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f*  $\rightrightarrows$

*gliss.* *gliss.*

3 3

Victory

25 Vc. *mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *ff* *pp*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f* *pp*  $\leftarrow$  *f* *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f*  $\rightrightarrows$  *f*  $\rightrightarrows$

*gliss.* *gliss.*

3 3



1'46" **31**

29 Vc. *pp*  $\leftarrow$  *f* *p*  $\rightrightarrows$  *mp* *By actual facts*

fl. (I) nat.



35 Vc. *p* *mp* *By actual facts* *p*

fl. (non vib.) nat. fl. (non vib.)



2'16"

**40** Moderato ♩ = 96 ...doubts ... and fears

40

Vc.

*mp* ————— *f* > *mf* *f* > *mf*

43

Vc.

*f* > *p* ————— *mf* *f* >

46

Vc.

*mf* *f* > *mf* *p* —————

49

Vc.

*mp* ————— *mf* *f* > *mf*

53

Vc.

*mp* ————— *mf* > *mf*

59

Vc.

> *f* *mf* > *mf* >

Vc. 66 *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *port.* II *port.*

Vc. 71 *mf* *f* *mf* *port.* II *port.*

Vc. 76 *mf* *f*

Vc. 82 *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *p*

Vc. 85 *mf* *mp* *mf* *port.* II *port.*

Vc. 92 *mf* *f*



4'23" **100** Andante ♩ = 80

98 **98** Andante moderato ♩ = 68  
sul pont.  
Vc. *gliss.*  
*p* *p* *ppp* *pp*  
nat. harm. gliss (IV)

101 *p* *mf* *pp* *mf* *p* *pp*  
sul pont. nat.

105 *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*



109 *p* *mf* *pp* *mf* *p* *p*  
sul pont. nat. col legno battuto

113 *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*  
nat.

117

Vc.

*mf* ————— *ff*      *pp* ————— *f*

II/III  
gliss.

120

Vc.

*pp* ————— *f*      *f* > *f* > *f* >      *mp* —————

gliss.

5'38"  
**124 superior**

124

Vc.

*mp* ————— *f* ————— *mf*      *f* ————— *mf*

127

Vc.

*f* ————— *p* —————      *mp* ————— *f*      *mf* <

130

Vc.

*f* ————— *mf* < *f*

**superior** 



6'10"

134

Tempo Primo ♩ = 68

sul pont.



6'16"

135

Allegro ♩ = 180



Vc. 134

*p* < > < > *p* < > < > *p* < > *p* < > *p* < *f*

Vc. 137

*p* ————— *f*      *mp* ————— *p*      < > < > *p* < > *p* < *f*



Vc. 142

*p* ————— *f*      *mp* ————— *p*      *mp* ————— *mf*

Vc. 148

————— *mp*      ————— *p*      < > < > *p* < > *p* < *f*



6'44" **the pioneer work of your ancestors**

**156** Andante ♩ = 80

154 Vc.

gliss. gliss.

3 3

the pioneer work of your ancestors



7'02"

**160** Allegro ♩ = 180

160 Vc.

gliss. gliss.

sul pont. nat.

*ff* *p* *ff* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *f* *p* *f*

172 Vc.

sul pont. nat. sul pont. nat.

*p* *mf* *p* *pp* *mf* *p*

182 Vc.

sul pont. non vib.

vary the pattern

*pp* *mp* *pp*

7'30" **KNOW thyself**

**187** Allegro ♩ = 132

Vc. 187

*mp f mp f mp mf p mp*

pizz. arco

Vc. 194

*f p mp f mp mf p mp*

pizz. arco

Vc. 201

*f p mf ff f f f*

Vc. 207

*mf ff f f f f mp*

8'10" **216** Presto ♩ = 180

Vc. 213

*f mp mf p ff p ff p ff p*

pizz. nat. gliss. gliss. gliss.



222 pizz. arco sul pont. nat. sul pont. nat. (III) sul pont.

Vc. *p* < *mf* *f* *p* < *f* *p* *mf* > *p* *pp*



235 nat. sul pont. non vib. 8'32" vary the pattern

Vc. *mf* > *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*

**know thyself**

8'38"

**243** Andante ♩ = 80

243

Vc. *mp* *f* *mf* < *f* *mf* < *f*

248

Vc. *mf* < *f* *mf* *ff* *pp* *f* *gliss.*

**know thyself**



252

Vc. *pp* < *f* *f* > *f* > *f* > *mp*



9'18"

**256** Moderato ♩ = 96

256

Vc. *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

*port.*

**Ghost of a Chance**

259

Vc. *f* *mf* *f* *mf*

*port.*

5 5



9'41"

**265** Allegro ♩ = 132

262

Vc. *f* *f* *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *mp*

*Rall.*

*sliss*



9'53"

**273**

268

Vc. *f* *mp* *mp* *f* *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

*arco*

*sliss*

275

Vc. *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mp* *f*

*pizz.* *arco*



282 arco

Vc. *mp* *f* *f* *mf* pizz.

289 arco

Vc. *p* *mf* *ff* *f* *f* *f* *mf*

Unbelievable Hardship  
10'32"  
**301** Più mosso

295

Vc. *ff* *f* *f* *f* *f* *f* *mp*

303

Vc. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf*

309

Vc. *ff* *f* *f* *f* *mf* *ff*



314

Vc. *f* *f* *f* *f* *ff* 10'55"

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