

The Cracked Kettle

for choir SSAATTB with soprano soloist

Bill Alves

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Program note: This title comes from an episode in Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, where the author says in his own voice (in Gerard Hopkins's translation), "After all, no one can ever give the exact measure of his needs, of his thoughts or his sorrows. Human language is like a cracked kettle on which we beat out tunes for bears to dance to, when all the time we are longing to move the stars to pity." This piece, however, is not a setting of Flaubert, nor of any text or language.

Performance notes: All notes with an x notehead are spoken without pitch but are short phonemes, that is, as if they were played by percussion instruments. Triangle noteheads indicate an indeterminate pitch in the range shown. The soprano soloist, who begins just before letter M, sings above the repeating chorus but in a free rhythm not synchronized with the chorus. At letter M and again at letter R, the chorus repeats until the solo is finished. The number of repetitions shown at these letters is only an estimate.

For Charles Kamm and Ronnie Brosterman with thanks.

Duration: approximately 6:40

The Cracked Kettle

Bill Alves

♩ = 144

A

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng!

chk!

sh!

B **C**

S

A

T

B

sh! sh! sh! pe-tah! sh! pah-keh

chk! chk! chk! chk!

tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng!

D **E**

S
A
T
B

sh! pe-tah! sh! pahkeh tah tah sh! pe-tah! sh! pahkeh tah tah

chk! chk! sh!

tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng!

F Indeterminate pitch *f*

S
A
T
B

sh! pe-tah! sh! pahkeh tah tah sh! pe-tah! sh! pahkeh tah tah

chk! chk! sh! chk! chk! sh! chk!

tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng! tng!

ah!

G 4x

S

A

T1

T2

B

sh! pe - tah! sh! pah-keh tah tah

ah — ah — ah — uh uh chk! chk! chk!

chk! chk! sh! ah — ah — ah — uh

tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng! — tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

Tenors divide

H 3x

S

A1

A2

T1

T2

B

sh! ah — ah — ah — uh uh pah-keh tah tah

uh pah-keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah — ah — ah —

ah — ah — ah — uh uh chk! chk! chk!

chk! chk! sh! ah — ah — ah — uh

tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng! — tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

Altos divide

I

S
A1
A2
T1
T2
B

sh! ah ah ah uh uh pah-keh tah tah ah!

uh pah-keh pah-keh pe-tah! sh! ah ah ah

ah ah ah uh uh chk! chk! chk!

chk! chk! sh! ah ah ah

tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

J 2x

Sopranos divide

S1
S2
A1
A2
T1
T2
B

da - yah ta - na - na ta - da - yah ta - na da - yah ta ah!

ta - na da - yah ta - da - na ta - na da - yah ta - da - na

1st time only

1st time only

K 8x

da - yah ta - na - na ta - da - yah ta - na da - yah ta ah!

ta - na da - yah ta - da - na ta - na da - yah ta - da - na

sh! ah ah ah uh uh pah-keh tah tah

uh pah-keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah ah ah

ah ah ah uh uh chk! chk! chk!

chk! chk! sh! ah ah ah uh

tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

L 4x

Sop. solo

Solo last time: *f*

p

tng! pah - keh tng! tah! tng! tng! tng! pah - keh tng! tng!

p

sh! ah — ah — ah — uh uh pah - keh tah tah

p

uh pah - keh pah keh pe - tah! sh! ah — ah — ah —

p

ah — ah — ah — uh uh chk! chk! chk!

p

chk! chk! sh! ah — ah — ah — uh

p Open* — closed — open — closed — etc.

aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm

*Move hand to alternately cover and uncover the mouth

M 8x or until solo ends

Sop. solo

wah ————— tah —————

f

S1

tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

S2

f

tah! tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

A1

f

sh! ah — ah — ah — uh uh pah-keh tah tah

A2

f

uh pah-keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah — ah — ah —

T1

ah — ah — ah — uh uh chk! chk! chk!

T2

f

chk! chk! sh! ah — ah — ah — uh

B

f

tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng! ————— tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

Chorus continues to repeat under solo

Sop. solo

nah ————— ee-yah-ee - yah ³ lah - doo - - - wah ————— lah - dee - yah -

Sop. solo

ee-yah-ee - yah - oh lo - no doo - yah tah - nah ————— doo - - - wah oh ————— *p*

Sop. solo

S1

S2

A1

A2

T1

T2

B

1st time only

ah__ ah__ ah__ uh uh chk! chk! chk!

chk! chk! sh! ah__ ah__ ah__ uh

sh! ah__ ah__ ah__ uh uh pah - keh tah tah

uh pah-keh pah keh pe - tah! sh! ah__ ah__ ah__

tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

tah! tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

S1
ah — ah — ah — uh uh chk! chk! chk!

S2
chk! chk! sh! ah — ah — ah —

A1
sh! ah — ah — ah — uh uh pah - keh tah tah

A2
uh pah - keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah — ah — ah —

T1
tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

T2
tah! tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

O 2x

S1
1st time only

S2
1st time only

A1
1st time only

A2
1st time only

T1
f da - yah ta - na - na ta - da - yah ta - na da - yah ta whoop!
Indeterminate pitch

T2
f ta - na da - yah ta - da - na ta - na da - yah ta - da - na

P 4x

S1
ah — ah — ah — uh uh chk! chk! chk!

S2
chk! chk! sh! ah — ah — ah — uh

A1
sh! ah — ah — ah — uh uh pah - keh tah tah

A2
uh pah - keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah — ah — ah —

T1
da - yah ta - na - na ta - da - yah ta - na da - yah ta whoop!

T2
ta - na da - yah ta - da - na ta - na da - yah ta - da - na

B
tng! pah - keh tng! tah! tng! tng! — tng! pah - keh tng! tng!

Q 3x

p

S1
tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

p

S2
tah! tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

p

A1
sh! ah___ ah___ ah___ uh uh pah-keh tah tah

p

A2
uh pah-keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah___ ah___ ah___

T1
ah___ ah___ ah___ uh uh chk! chk! chk!

p

T2
chk! chk! sh! ah___ ah___ ah___ uh

p

B
tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng!___ tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

Sop. solo

p

oh _____ lo - no doo - - - - yah

S1

tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

S2

tah! tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

A1

sh! ah _____ ah _____ ah _____ uh uh pah - keh tah tah

A2

uh pah - keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah _____ ah _____ ah _____

T1

ah _____ ah _____ ah _____ uh uh chk! chk! chk!

T2

chk! chk! sh! ah _____ ah _____ ah _____ uh

B

tng! pah - keh tng! tah! tng! tng! _____ tng! pah - keh tng! tng!

R **6X** or until solo ends

f

Sop. solo
ah ————— tah - - - nah —————

S1
ah — ah — ah — uh uh chk! chk! chk!

S2
chk! chk! sh! ah — ah — ah — uh

A1
sh! ah — ah — ah — uh uh pah-keh tah tah

A2
uh pah-keh pah-keh pe-tah! sh! ah — ah — ah —

T1
da - yah ta - na - na ta - da - yah ta - na da - yah ta ah!

T2
ta - na da - yah ta - da - na ta - na da - yah ta - da - na

B
f

aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm - aw - mm

*Move hand to alternately cover and uncover the mouth

Sop. solo

lo - doo - yah nah ————— doo - - - - - wah —————

S 2x

Sop. solo

1st time only

p

p

p

p

—

tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

sh! pah-keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! pah-keh tah tah

ch - kuh chk! ch - kuh sh! ch - kuh chk! chk!

sh! tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh

T 2x

Sopranos divide

S1

S2

Altos divide

A1

A2

Tenors divide

T1

T2

B

f

f

f

f

da - yah ta - na - na ta - da - yah ta - na da - yah ta ah!

ta - na da - yah ta - da - na ta - na da - yah ta - da - na

sh! ah ah ah uh uh pah-keh tah tah

uh pah-keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah ah ah

ah ah ah uh uh chk! chk! chk!

chk! chk! sh! ah ah ah uh

tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

U

The musical score consists of five staves. The first four staves are for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The fifth staff is for a Soprano solo (Sop. solo). The lyrics are as follows:

Staff	Lyrics
S	tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh
A	sh! pah - keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! pah - keh tah tah
T	ch - kuh chk! ch - kuh sh! ch - kuh chk! chk!
B	sh! tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh tah! ch - kuh ch - kuh
Sop. solo	dee - - - - yah - - - -

V 2x

Sop. solo: ee - - yah - ee - - oh doo - - - -

S1: da - yah ta - na - na ta - da - yah ta - na da - yah ta ah!

S2: ta - na da - yah ta - da - na ta - na da - yah ta - da - na

A1: sh! ah ah ah uh uh pah-keh tah tah

A2: uh pah-keh pah - keh pe - tah! sh! ah ah ah

T1: ah ah ah uh uh chk! chk! chk!

T2: chk! chk! sh! ah ah ah uh

B: tng! pah-keh tng! tah! tng! tng! tng! pah-keh tng! tng!

Sop. solo: yah tah - - - nah

W

S
 tah! ch-kuh ch-kuh tah! ch-kuh ch-kuh

A
 sh! pah-keh pah-keh pe-tah! sh! pah-keh tah tah

T
 ch-kuh chk! ch-kuh sh! ch-kuh chk! chk!

B
 sh! tah! ch-kuh ch-kuh tah! ch-kuh ch-kuh tng! tng!