



PETER JAMES LEARN

ELEUSINIAN  
FEVRE  
FRAGMENTS

For Pianist  
with  
Vocalization

Written in Bass/Baritone range, but may be octave-transposed to suit  
any voice type - mostly vocalise, but with some text fragments  
drawn from the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*)

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# ELEUSINIAN FEVRE FRAGMENTS

## THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES:

The Eleusinian Mysteries (Ελευσίνια Μυστήρια) were initiations held each year for the cult of Demeter and Persephone based at the Panhellenic Sanctuary of Eleusis in ancient Greece, from early Hellenic antiquity through the fourth century, C.E. To this day the Eleusinian Mysteries remain a subject enshrouded by fragmentary and contradictory accounts, creating great controversy amongst historians trying to puzzle out this ancient tradition. Details involving the rites and celebrations which took place during the Mysteries are further obscured by the sworn oath of secrecy undertaken by the participants, among whom the most well-informed were powerful and respected members of the Greek and Roman elite, including the emperor Marcus Aurelius, as well as other luminaries and statesmen.

What we do know about the Mysteries and speculations as to their nature are contradictory, with theories ranging from genuine religious experience, to mass suggestion and the likely use of psychotropic substances during the rites, owing to the vow of secrecy taken by the participants and officiants. Although modern historians still argue about different aspects regarding this mystic ritual, some ideas are often accepted among them, which are understood by the testimonials of the casually-initiated - there were four tiers of initiation and ritual knowledge, the lowest of which only required only knowledge of Greek language and culture.

The structure of the priesthood was also highly organized, separated into six castes with different responsibilities in both officiation and lore-keeping. Panageis ('the holy') melissae ('bees'), a group of priestesses who lived a life secluded from men; the Hierophantides, two married priestesses - one serving Demeter and the other Persephone; Dadouchos - men serving as torch bearers; the Dadouchousa Priestess; the High Priestess of Demeter; and the Hierophantes, the High Priest of Demeter. The last three were inherited positions passed down through two important families. There were four categories of people participated in the Eleusinian Mysteries: the priests, priestesses, and hierophants; the initiates, undergoing the ceremony for the first time; those who had already participated at least once (eligible for the fourth category); and those who had attained épopteia (ἐποπτεία), (roughly "contemplation"), who had learned the secrets of the greatest mysteries of Demeter.

According to myth, and recounted in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, the goddess stopped to rest at Eleusis during her quest for her daughter, Persephone, who was given unwillingly to the god Hades by Zeus. There Demeter ordered a temple and altar to be built in her honor. After the reunion of the goddess with the missing Persephone, Demeter relented in her rebellion of withholding the progression of the seasons in exchange for Zeus allowing Persephone to spend Demeter's time of year amongst the gods of Olympus, rather than with Hades in the underworld. As part of the exchange, she instructed the leaders of Eleusis in how to perform her rites, ensuring bountiful harvest and fertility. In practice, those inducted into the Mysteries celebrated both her associated traits, fertility and bounty, and also the hedonistic associations of her daughter Persephone.

There is a strong case that the religious ecstasies associated with the Eleusinian Mysteries were of a psychotropic nature. In their book "THE ROAD TO ELEUSIS: Unveiling the Secret of the Mysteries," the scholars Gordon Wasson, Albert Hofmann, and Carl Ruck (experts in the fields of mycology, hallucinogenic drugs, and Greek ethnobotany, respectively) hold that there are many parallels between the Eleusinian Mysteries and ancient South American religious rites using sacred mushrooms with psychedelic properties, citing similarities between accounts of the rituals and ensuing visions experienced by the participants. Thus it is understandable why those who participated in the Mysteries felt they had undergone an otherworldly experience, the awe of which might inspire their reticence to divulge the precise details of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

Sophocles, himself an initiate into the Mysteries is said to have pronounced that:

*"Thrice happy are those of mortals, who having  
seen those rites depart for Hades; for to them  
alone is granted to have a true life there. For  
the rest, all there is evil."*

The pianist is required to sing in this work - this is a piece for *one* performer. Transpose vocal part to comfortable register as needed (especially if female), but avoid doing so mid-phrase. Use your judgement to achieve the most musical result.

# ELEUSINIAN FEVRE FRAGMENTS

PETER JAMES LEARN (b. 1982)  
BMI

(hummed/sung in comfortable octave)

Gentle, crystalline, with rubato (♩ = c. 60)

I.

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

*pochiss. ped.*

*p* Hmm... —

8

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

*riten. ----- / a tempo*

*p* Hmm... —

16

*p* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *p*

*p* Hmm... —

19

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

*p* Hmm... —



## Solemn (♩ = 60)

III.

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

*p* *mf* *p*

loco 8vb

8

*mp* *pp* *mf*

*p* *mf* *p*

loco 8vb

16

*mf* *mp* *<mf>* *mp* *mf* *mp*

*p* *mf* *p*

loco 8vb

23

*mp* *mf* *pp*

Ahh... Ahh...

*loco* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *mp*

loco 8vb

30

*mp* *mf* *pp*

*loco* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *mp*

loco 8vb

64

*mp* *pp* *delicato ritmico*

(Leo.)

69

*p* *mf* *p*

Ahh... Ahh...

*mf* *pp* *mf*

*p* *mf*

8vb loco loco

(Leo.)

76

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Ahh... Ahh... Ahh... Ooo...

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

8vb

(Leo.)

81

*mf* *pp*

loco loco

8vb

(Leo.)

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## Calm, restrained but rhythmic (♩ = 108)

IV.

The piano introduction consists of two staves in 3/4 time. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The music features a series of chords and arpeggiated figures. Dynamics include *ff sharp*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *mf*, and *p*. There are several accents (^) and a 'V' marking at the bottom of the first staff.

(female voice should sing up an octave, if able)

10 *sotto voce, as if to oneself* *mf*

Vocal line (bass clef):  
 I be - gin to sing — of De - me - ter, —  
 Dynamics: *mf*, *pp*, *p*

Piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs):  
 Dynamics: *mp*, *pp*, *p*

Annotations: *Leo.*, *8<sup>vb</sup>*, optional una corda, al m. 28, *8<sup>vb</sup> - -*

15

Vocal line (bass clef):  
 — ho - ly God - dess — with beau - ti - ful tress - es, —  
 Dynamics: *pp*, *p*, *pp*

Piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs):  
 Dynamics: *pp*, *p*, *pp*

Annotations: *8<sup>vb</sup>*, *Leo.*, *loco mf*, *8<sup>vb</sup> pp*

20

Vocal line (bass clef):  
 and of her daugh - ter, Per - seph - o - ne, — she of the del - i -  
 Dynamics: *mp*, *p*, *mp*, *pp*

Piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs):  
 Dynamics: *mp*, *p*, *mp*, *pp*

Annotations: *loco p*, *8<sup>vb</sup>*, *Leo.*

*molto rit. ----- /*

26 cate an - kles, whom Ha - des seized.

*a tempo*

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

*mf* *8vb* *mp* *8vb* *p* *pp* *loco*

(*Leo*)

33

(*Leo*)

38

*loco* (r.h.)

(*Leo*)

### Liberamente

*mf* *poco* *f*

43 She was made chat - tel by Zeus,

*mf* *sf*

(*Leo*)

## Slower (♩ = 92)

*mp*

67 *riten. ----- /*

she of the gold - en dou - ble axe,

*f* *p* *pp*

(8vb) -----

(Loco) -----

74 *molto rit. ----- /*

who glo - ries, she who glo - ries in, in the har - vest.

(8vb) -----

(Loco) -----

loco

81 *lunga* **Tempo I** (♩ = 108)

*mf* *ff* *f* *mf* *loco*

(Loco) -----

86 *loco* *lunga*

*mp* *p* *pp*

(Loco) -----

## Ethereal, with rubato (♩ = c. 92)

(accel.) (rit.) (accel. e rit. sim. sempre)

V. *fp* — *mp* — *pp* *dynamics sim.*

Reo.

5 *fp* — *mp* — *pp* *8<sup>vb</sup> loco (sim.)* *mf* — *mp* — *pp* *(sim.)*

Reo.

9 *p* < *mf* > *pp* *sim.* *sim., e cresc., poco a poco* *mf* — *f* — *mp* < *mf* > *p*

Reo.

15 *ethereal p* *Ahh...* *p* — *mp* — *p* *Ahh...* *p* < *mp* > *pp* *Ahh...* *p* < *mp* > *p* *mp* —

Reo.

21 *mp* — *pp* *mp* — *mf* — *p* *p* — *mp* — *pp* *Ooo...* *p* — *mp* — *pp* *Ooo...* *dynamics sim.*

Reo.

**Pulsing** (♩ = 120)  $\delta_{va}$

VI.

*pp* *f* *mp* *loco*

*Reo.*

5

*Reo.*

10

*sfz* *mp*

*Reo.*

15

*sfz* *mp*

*Reo.*

20

*Reo.*

24

*sfz* *mp*

*Reo.*

29

*mp* *sfz* *mp* *sfz* *mp*

(Leo.)

34

(Leo.)

39

*mp* *p* *mp* *p*

(Leo.)

## Liberamente

A tempo (♩ = 120)

46

*mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp*

The awe of the Gods holds back an y,

*pp* *mp* *pp*

(Leo.)

51

*p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *breve*

an y from

*mp* *breve*

(Leo.)