Nic Gotham

Strategy

(2010)
for female voices SSA,
alto saxophone (at concert pitch in score), piano, and contrabass
Duration: 19 minutes
The text of Strategy is excerpted from John Minford's translation of The Art of War (ca. 500 B.C.) by Chinese general and scholar Sun Tzu, and is used by permission of John Minford.
...a grave affair of state, a place of life and death, a road transient and extinction, a

There are Five, Fun-da

mat ter to be pon-der’d care-ful-ly

mat ter to be pon-der’d care-ful-ly

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distance and pro-xi-mi-ty,
 ease and dan-ger, o-pe-n and con-fi ned ground, life and death.
Com-mand is
Com-mand is
pizz.
arco
distance and pro-xi-mi-ty,
 ease and dan-ger, o-pe-n and con-fi ned ground, life and death. Com-mand is
Com-mand is
pizz.
arco

(1) Wis-dom, (2) In-te-grity, (3) Com-pas-sion, (4) Cou rage, (5) Se-ve-rity
Dis-ci-pli ne is or-ga-ni
(1) Wis-dom, (2) In-te-grity, (3) Com-pas-sion, (4) Cou rage, (5) Se-ve-rity
Dis-ci-pli ne
S. 1
better trained? For whom are re-wards and pu-nish-ments clear est?

S. 2
better trained? For whom are re-wards and pu-nish-ments clear est?

A. Sx.
best plan, Ex-ploit the dy-na-mic with-in, de-ve-lop it with out __ Fol low

A. Sx.
best plan, __ Fol low

Pf.
Fol low

Cb.

S. 2
the-ad-van-tage, and mas-ter op-por-tu-ni-ty.

A. the-ad-van-tage, and mas-ter op-por-tu-ni-ty.

A. Sx.
__ pp __

Pf.

Cb.
A. Sx.

S. 2

A.

Pf.

Cb.

S. 1

A.

Pf.

Cb.

S. 1

A.

Pf.

Cb.
feet is like a grain weighed against a pound.

Victory is like pent-up water erasing thousand fathoms into a gorge.

This is all a matter of Forms and Dispositions.
Ma-ny is the same as few. It's a ques-tion of di-vi-sion.

Mar-shall with

gongs, i-den-ti-fy with flags. Com-bi-ned

In-di rect and Di-rec-t, Un-de-stand-ing Weak-ness and Strength,

Mar-shall with

The In-di rect is in-fi-nite as Hea-ven and Earth, In-ex-haus-

En-gag-e di-rec-ty, se-cure vic-to-ry in-di-rec-ty.

En-gag-e di-rec-ty, se-cure vic-to-ry in-di-rec-ty.
4. Sx.

Able as river and sea, it ends again like sun and moon, dies and is born again.

Pf.

S. 2

Like the four seasons.

A. Sx.

There are but five notes, and yet their permutations are more than can ever be heard.

Pf.

S. 2

E - ver be heard. There are but Five Colours, and yet their permutations are more than can ever be seen.

Cb.
There are but Five Flavours, and yet their permutations are more than can ever be tasted.

In-direct and Direct, their permutations are inexhaustible. They give rise to each other in a never-ending inexhaustible circle.

A rush ing torrent carries boulders...
on its flood; Such is the energy of its momentum. A swooping falcon breaks the back of its prey.

Such is the precision of its timing. Devastating energy, taut timing. 

Order is founded on order, Fear on courage, weakness on strength.
Or-der-ly dis-or-der is based on care-ful di-
vis-ion, cou-ra-gous fear on po-
ten-tial

Like rol-ling logs or
e-ne-ry

strong weak-
ness on dis-
po-si-
tions.

strong weak-
ness on dis-
po-
si-
tions.

boul-
ders: By their na-
ture, on le vel ground, logs and boul-
ders stay still; on

stay still;

stay still;
steep ground they move. they halt. they roll... boulders rolling down a mighty mountain.

they move. Square, they halt. Round, they roll like round boulders rolling down a mighty mountain.

They move. They halt. They roll... boulders rolling down a mighty mountain. These are all matters of potential energy.

First on the field waits. fresh. Last on the field charges in, ex-hausted. To

First on the field waits. fresh. Last on the field charges in, ex-hausted.
stir and not be stirred, to lure on or obstruct from coming, to unsettle the settled,
appearing at the place where least expected. Without form,
irresistibly, then retreating, too swift to be caught.
without sound, ad vanishing
con-cen-tra-ted in to one, he is di- vi- ded in to ten. I am ten to his one,

con-cen-tra-ted in to one, he is di- vi- ded in to ten, give I am ten to his one,

con-cen-tra-ted in to one, he is di- vi- ded in to ten. I am ten to his one,
A. Sx.

scru... ti... nize him, know the flaws in his plans.

A. Sx.

scru... ti... nize him, know the flaws in his plans.

Pf.

Rouse him, discover the springs in his actions.

Cb.

These things must be studied: The vari-

Cb.

These things must be studied: These things
A. Sx.

S. 2

A.

A. Sx.

Pf.

Cb.

must be studied: The variations of the Nine Kinds of Ground, The Ad-variables of Flexible Manoeuvre.

A. Sx.

Pf.

Cb.


we ensure continuity of supplies we keep on the

we ensure continuity of supplies On intractable ground we keep on the

heavy ground, we ensure continuity of supplies we keep on the

move. On enclosed ground, we block the passes. On death ground, we demonstrate the depravity

move. On enclosed ground, we block the passes. On death ground, we demonstrate the depravity
S. 1
Fol-low him to fight the de-ci-sive bat-tle.
At first, be like a maid-en.

S. 2
the de-ci-sive bat-tle.
At first, be like a maid-en.

A.

the de-ci-sive bat-tle.
At first, be like a maid-en.

A. Sx.

When he o-pens the door,
be swift as a hare:
He

S. 2

When he o-pens the door,
be swift as a hare:
He

A.

When he o-pens the door,
be swift as a hare:
He

A. Sx.

Pf.

Cb.
S. 1
will not stand you.

S. 2
will not stand you.

A.
will not stand you.

A. Sx.

Pf.

Cb.