

THEY PARK THE CAR BY THE MARINA  
(aria for Tenor)

from

THE GOLDEN GATE

opera in two acts

music by  
CONRAD CUMMINGS

libretto from the novel-in-verse by  
VIKRAM SETH  
adapted by the composer





## **Composer's Note**

Vikram Seth's best-selling novel-in-verse about love and loss in San Francisco in the 1980's, "The Golden Gate," touches on all the nostalgia I feel for my home town and reminds me acutely of the adventures of my younger life. Boys with girls, boys with boys, it's all there, along with the exhilaration and the heartbreak. Seth's verse makes these experiences sing; I've tried to capture in music their unique mixture of pathos and humor.

## **Feel Free to Contact Me**

Singers and pianists should feel free to contact me at [conrad@conradcummings.com](mailto:conrad@conradcummings.com) with any questions, reactions, or thoughts. I am always open to suggestions about customizing the vocal line to best suit your voice.

## **Synopsis**

Five twenty-somethings experience love, life, and loss in the magical and innocent San Francisco of the early 1980's. JOHN BROWN (baritone), handsome and successful, will discover too late the price of his emotional detachment. He meets LIZ DORATI (soprano) through a personals ad placed by his former college girlfriend JANET HAYAKAWA (mezzo), a sculptor and punk rock drummer. Meanwhile, John's best friend from college PHILIP WEISS (bass), reeling from a divorce which has left him the single parent of six-year-old PAUL WEISS (spoken role), begins a passionate relationship with ED DORATI (tenor), Liz's younger brother. Couples come apart; new couples form, families are created, friendships are severed. A tragic death leads John, always the outsider, to the promise of a deeper connection and a warmer life.

## **Where the Aria Comes in the Opera**

Tension between John and Liz has been growing. John is horrified to learn of Phil and Ed's relationship, though it's recently ended in a violent fight. Liz and Phil drive together to the Marina. The fog clears, revealing the Golden Gate Bridge. All five characters see it from their different emotional perspectives. But this quintet finale to the first act began life as a standalone aria for Ed. Here it is, given back to him.



ED:

They park the car by the Marina.  
The surface of the cobalt bay  
Is flecked with white. The moister, keener  
October air has rinsed away  
The whispering mists with crisp intensity  
And over the opaque immensity  
A deliquescent wash of blue  
Reveals the bridge, long lost to view  
In summer's quilt of fog: the towers,  
High-built, red-gold, with their long span  
—The most majestic spun by man—  
Whose threads of steel through mists and showers,  
Wind, spray, and the momentous roar  
Of ocean storms, link shore to shore.

— from Vikram Seth's novel-in-verse "The Golden Gate," Chapter 9, Verse 28



# THEY PARK THE CAR BY THE MARINA

(aria for Tenor)

version 6/28/15

music by CONRAD CUMMINGS

libretto from the novel-in-verse by VIKRAM SETH adapted by the composer

Ed  
(Tenor)

$\text{♩} = 72$  *sonorous, like waves rolling on the Pacific*

Piano

*ff*

2

Ed

*p* *mf*

They park the car by the Ma - ri - - - - -

Pno.

*p* *mf*

4 *f* *p* *p*

Ed  
8 na. The sur - face of the co - balt

Pno.

5

6 *mf* *mf*

Ed  
8 bay Is flecked with

Pno.

7

8 *f* *f*

Ed  
8 white The moist - er, keen - er

Pno.

9



10 *mp*

Ed

8

Oc - to - ber air has rinsed a - way the whisp' ring mists with

Pno.

*mp*

12 *f* *mf cresc.* -----

Ed

8

crisp in - ten - si - ty And ov - er

Pno.

*f* *mf cresc.* -----

(I fully realize that rules of English diction require this "the" to be pronounced "thee." But the progression of vowels through the phrase is so much more beautiful if it's pronounced "tha." Please consider it.)

*broaden* *a tempo*

14 *f* *f*

Ed

8 the o - paque im - men - si - ty A

*broaden* *a tempo*

Pno.

*f*

16 *ff* *ff*

Ed

8 del - i - ques - cent wash of blue

Pno.

*ff*

18 *f*

Ed  
8 Re - veals the bridge.

Pno. *f*

20 *p*

Ed

Pno. *p* *pp*

22 *p*

Ed  
8 long lost to view In sum - mer's quilt of

Pno. *poco cresc.* *p*

24

Ed

8

fog: \_\_\_\_\_

*mf*

The

Pno.

26

Ed

8

tow - ers, High - built, red - -

*cresc.* -----

Pno.

27

Ed

8

gold, \_\_\_\_\_ with their long

*mf*

Pno.

28 *f* *mf*

Ed span The most ma -

Pno. *f* *mf cresc.*

*broaden* *a tempo* *f*

29 jes - tic spun by man

Pno. *f*

30 *mf*

Ed Whose

Pno. *mf*

31 *cresc.* -----

Ed  
8 threads of steel through

Pno.  
*cresc.* -----

32

Ed  
8 mists and show - ers,

Pno.

33

Ed  
8 Wind, spray, and the mo - men - tous roar Of

Pno.  
----- (*cresc.*) -----

35 *ff*

Ed  
8 oc - cean storms,

Pno. *ff*

36 *ff*

Ed  
8 link

Pno. *ff* *ff*

*sffz*

37

Ed  
8 shore to

Pno. *ff* *ff*

38

Ed

shore

Pno.

*ff*

*ff cresc.*

*fffz*

Ped.

39

Ed

Pno.

*fff*