

# the memory of all that

a holy sonnet of John Donne  
for Milton Babbitt (1916-2011)

benjamin boretz  
january/february 2011

Death be not proud, though some have called thee  
Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not so,  
For, those whom thou thinkst thou dost overthrow,  
Die not, poore death, nor yet canst thou kill me.  
From rest and sleepe, which but thy pictures bee,  
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flowe,  
And soonest our best men with thee doe goe,  
Rest of their bones, and soules deliverie.  
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,  
AND dost with poyson, warre, and sickness dwell,  
And poppie, or charmes, can make us sleepe as well,  
And better than thy stroake; why swell'st thou then;  
One shorte sleepe past, we wake eternally,  
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die

the memory of all that  
a holy sonnet of John Donne  
for Milton Babbitt (1916-2011)

John Donne

Benjamin Boretz

$\text{♩} = 80$  sung like speaking low, an underdramatized pitched sprechstimme, carefully in time  
*pp\**

Death be not proud, though some have called thee Migh ty and dread full,

$\text{♩} = 80$

*pp\**

2 *p*

for, thou art not so, For, those whom thou thinkst thou dost o ver throw,

3 *pp*

Die not, poore

\*dynamic markings in this score are intended to indicate sensibility rather than absolute volume levels.

3

4 *ppp*

death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

5

*pp* *p* *pp*

*pp*

6

*mp*

From rest

*p* *pp* *pp* *pp*

the pitches from here through m.9 should sound "gestural" rather than "structural"

7

and sleepe, which but thy

8

pic - tures

9

bee

*ppp*

10

*ppp*

Much pleasure, And, from thee

Piano accompaniment for measures 10-11. The right hand features a melodic line with a trill on the first measure and a half note on the second. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Dynamics include *p* and *pp*.

11

much more must flowe And

Piano accompaniment for measures 11-12. The right hand continues the melodic line with a half note and a quarter note. The left hand has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *pp* and *mp*.

12

soon est, our best

Piano accompaniment for measure 12. The right hand has a half note and a quarter note. The left hand has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *ppp*.

15

men with thee doe goe,

This system contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 15 and 16. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are "men with thee doe goe,". The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand treble staff and a left-hand bass staff. The bass line features a long, sweeping melodic line with a fermata over the final note.

*pp*

Rest

*ppp*

This system contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 16 and 17. The vocal line has a whole rest in measure 16, labeled "Rest", and begins in measure 17. The piano accompaniment continues with a long, sweeping melodic line in the bass staff, marked with a piano fortissimo (*ppp*) dynamic.

17

of their bones And soules

This system contains the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 17 and 18. The vocal line is in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are "of their bones And soules". The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand treble staff and a left-hand bass staff. The bass line features a long, sweeping melodic line with a fermata over the final note.

19

*f*

de li ver ance Thou - u ar=

*mf* *p*

20

*mp* *p*

rt slave to Fate,

*pp* *pp*

22

Chance, kings, and des per ate men, And dost

*mp*



23

*p*

with poy son, warre, and sick nesse dwell,

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

*ppp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

9

play/sing as first three, then four independent lines, rather in the spirit of Franco of Cologne-notated motet - but remember: harmony counts...

24

*p*

And pop pie, or charmes, can make us

25

sleepe as well, And bet - ter than



29

ter nal ly

*ppp*

*slightly louder*

*pp*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 29 and 30. Measure 29 features a vocal line with notes for 'ter', 'nal', and 'ly' under a *ppp* dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment consists of sustained chords in both hands. Measure 30 continues the piano accompaniment with a *pp* dynamic marking. The vocal line for measure 30 is not present in this system.

30

And death shall be no more

*ppp*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 30 and 31. Measure 30 features a vocal line with notes for 'And', 'death', 'shall', 'be', 'no', and 'more' under a *ppp* dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment consists of sustained chords in both hands. Measure 31 continues the piano accompaniment with a *pp* dynamic marking. The vocal line for measure 31 is not present in this system.

31

Death, thou shalt die

*pp*

*strictly in time, no drama, uninflected*

Detailed description: This system contains measure 31. The vocal line features notes for 'Death', 'thou', 'shalt', and 'die' under a *pp* dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment is empty. A performance instruction *strictly in time, no drama, uninflected* is placed above the vocal staff. The system ends with a double bar line.

TT: 10:52