

MICHAEL ZEV GORDON

THIRTEEN WAYS

for soprano, cello, double bass, harp
and percussion (marimba and temple bells)

Preview File Only

This work was commissioned by the
1995 Oxford Contemporary Music Festival
with funds provided by Southern Arts.

NOTES

The score is written in C.

Accidentals apply only to the notes they directly precede.

Grace-notes should always be performed on the beat.

NB that some movements are *attacca*, and others not.

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A BLACKBIRD

I

Among twenty snowy mountains,
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird.

II

I was of three minds,
Like a tree
In which there are three blackbirds.

III

The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds.
It was a small part of the pantomime.

IV

A man and a woman
Are one.
A man and a woman and a blackbird are one.

V

I do not know which to prefer,
The beauty of inflections
Or the beauty of innuendos,
The blackbird whistling
Or just after.

VI

Icicles filled the long window
With barbaric glass.
The shadow of the blackbird
Crossed it, to and fro.
The mood
Traced in the shadow
An indecipherable cause.

VII

O thin men of Haddam,
Why do you imagine golden birds?
Do you not see how the blackbird
Walks around the feet
Of the women about you?

VIII

I know noble accents
And lucid inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know.

IX

When the blackbird flew out of sight,
It marked the edge
Of one of many circles.

X

At the sight of blackbirds
Flying in a green light,
Even the bawds of euphony
Would cry out sharply.

XI

He rode over Connecticut
In a glass coach.
Once, a fear pierced him,
In that he mistook
The shadow of the equipage
For blackbirds.

XII

The river is moving.
The blackbird must be flying.

XIII

It was evening all afternoon.
It was snowing
And it was going to snow.
The blackbird sat
In the cedar-limbs.

Wallace Stevens
{Collected Poems,
Faber and Faber}

$\text{♩} = 60$

I

pp chiariss. delicatiss. *Rit* *A TEMPO*

A mong twenty snowy mountains _____ (s)

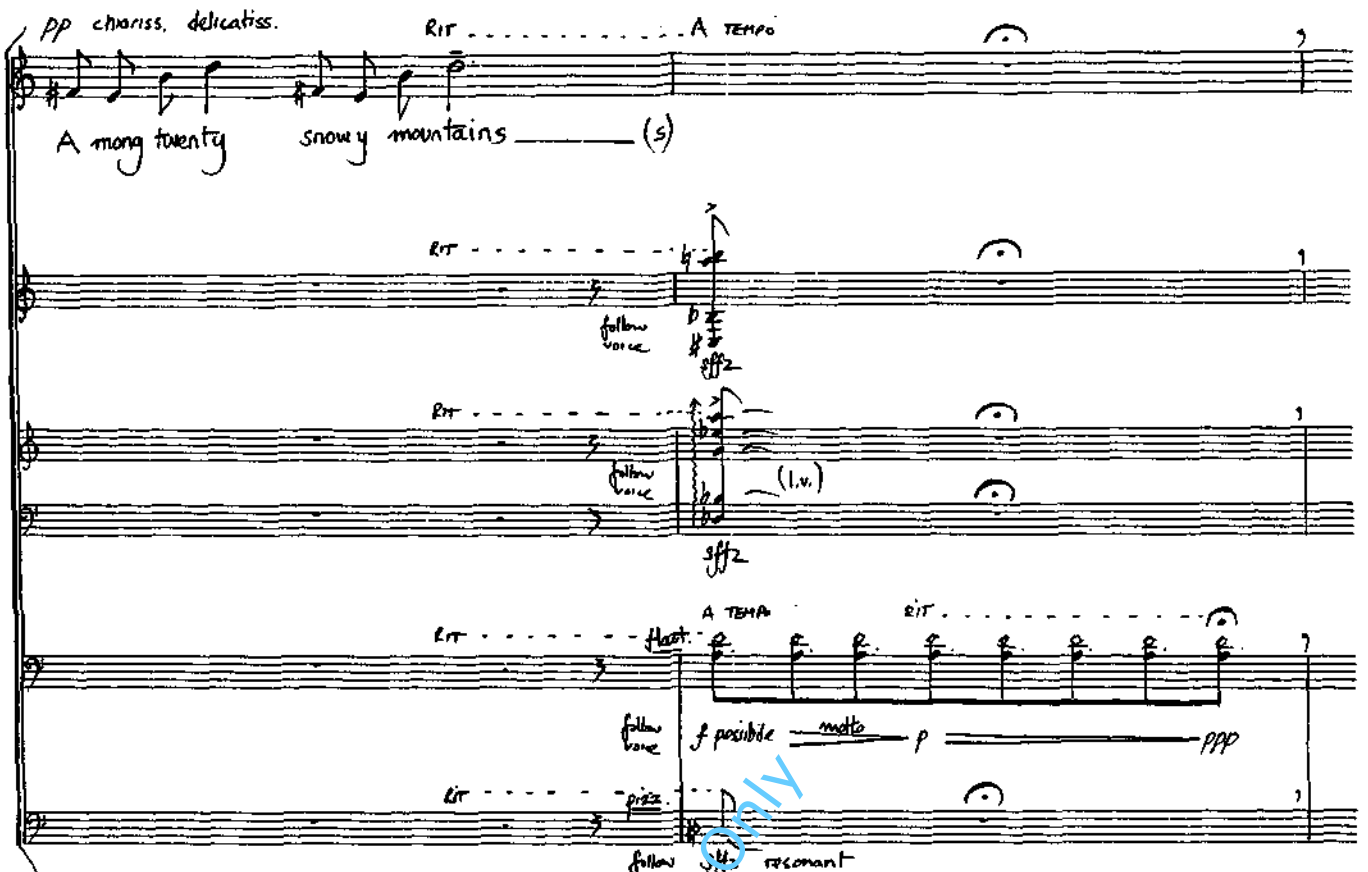
follow voice *ffz*

follow voice *(l.v.)* *ffz*

Rit *A TEMPO* *Rit* ?

follow voice *f possibile* *molto* *p* *ppp*

Rit *pizz.* *follow voice* *resonant*



A TEMPO
pp sempre semplice

The on-ly mo-ving thing was the eye of the black bird _____

start (s) rit. *attaca*

attaca

attaca

attaca

attaca

attaca



♩=168 (♩=84)

II

4
16

6
16

5
16

4
16

6
16

5
16

sf p taut

mf p *mf p*

p taut

stacc

pizz

pizz *p*

p taut

8

mp *(pizz) rhythmic?*

I was of three — minds

5
16

4
16

6
16

5
16

4
16

6
16

mf p

p — mf mp

mp

mp

14

mf

I was — of three minds —

6 5 4 6 4
16 16 16 16 16

mp — *mf* *mp* — *mf*

mp *mp* *mf*

20

— three minds

6 5 4 6 5
16 16 16 16 16

f

f

f

23

5 4 like a tree in which there

16 16

f

f cresc. al fine

f cresc. al fine

f cresc. al fine

f cresc. al fine

39

are three or black birds (irds)

f

ff

damp?

out?

out?

Handwritten musical score for a string ensemble. The score consists of six staves. The first staff has a treble clef and contains the following dynamics and markings: *f*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. Below the first two staves, the word "(birds)" is written with a horizontal line underneath. The word "attaca" is written at the end of each of the six staves. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is oriented diagonally across the page.

$\text{♩} = 96$

Handwritten musical score for a piano. The score is in 6/4 time, indicated by the numbers "6" and "4" on the left. It consists of four staves. The first staff has a treble clef and contains dynamics *sfz*, *sf*, *ff*, and *sim. sfz*. The second staff has a bass clef and contains dynamics *sf*, *ff*, *sim. sf*, and *sf*. The third and fourth staves also have bass clefs and contain dynamics *sf*, *ff*, and *sim. sf*. The phrase "sudden, bright" is written below the first two staves. Trills are marked with "tr" above notes in all staves. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is oriented diagonally across the page.

3 *sub ff bright!* \uparrow \uparrow

The black bird

sf sf sf sf

sf sf sf sf

sf sf sf sf

sf sf

5 \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow

whirled (un)whirled (whirled)

sf sf sf sf

sf sf sf sf

sf sf

sf sf

mf *f* *ff* *ff sempre*
in the au ————— turn winds —————

p: subff *ppff* *ff* *ff* *sm*
ff *p: subff* *p* *ff* *ff* *ff* *sm*

tr *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr*
ff *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *sm* *ff*
ff *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *sm* *ff*

sempre ff
it was a small part —————

ff *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff*
ff *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *mf* *subff*
pos. norm. *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr*
ff *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*
pos. norm. *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr*
ff *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

11 *ff* *dim.* *pp*

of the pan ——— to ——— mime ———

ff *p: subff* *p: mf* *pp*

p *subff* *p* *damp!*

ff *mf* *pp*

ff *mf* *pp*

ff *p* *pp*

$\text{♩} = 98 (\text{♩} = 96)$

pp *dolciss.* *poc. vibrato ma sempre espress.* *pp* *(s)* *p*

A man ——— and ——— a wo man ———

(poco) *sim.*

3 2 3 2 3

4 4 4 4 4

(pizz.)

pp *delicatis. (sounds 8va higher)* *(pp)* *pp* *p* *pp*

pp *p* *pp* *p*

pp *p* *pp* *p*

Handwritten musical score for the first system, measures 1-4. The score includes vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

Measures 1-2: The vocal line begins with the lyrics "are one" and features a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *pp*. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line with dynamics *(pp)*, *p*, and *pp*. A large "3" is written vertically on the left side of the first two staves.

Measures 3-4: The vocal line continues with dynamics *p* and *p resonant*. The piano accompaniment features a five-note arpeggiated figure in the right hand and a bass line with dynamics *p* and *pp*. The word "pizz" is written above the final measure of the piano part.

Handwritten musical score for the second system, measures 5-8. The score includes vocal lines and piano accompaniment.

Measures 5-6: The vocal line begins with the lyrics "A man" and features a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mp*. The piano accompaniment includes a bass line with dynamics *p* and *mp*, and a right hand with dynamics *p* and *mp*. A large "2" is written vertically between the staves.

Measures 7-8: The vocal line continues with the lyrics "and a" and features a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mp*. The piano accompaniment includes a bass line with dynamics *p* and *mp*, and a right hand with dynamics *p* and *mp*. A large "3" is written vertically between the staves.

Handwritten musical score for the first system, measures 10-23. The score includes vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "wo man a man and a wo man". The music features dynamic markings such as *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *p* (piano), and includes triplet markings (2/4 and 3/4). There are also some handwritten annotations like "s" and "r".

Handwritten musical score for the second system, measures 24-31. The lyrics are: "and a black bird". The music features dynamic markings such as *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *p* (piano), and includes triplet markings (3/4 and 2/4). There are also some handwritten annotations like "not long" and "not long" with a curved arrow indicating a breath mark.

27 *p* *mp (non più)* *mp sempre* *(mp)*

A man — and a wo man — and — a black bird — are one

3 *3* *3*

4 *8* *4*

very soft sticks

p *mp sempre* *(mp)*

mp *mp sempre* *(mp)*

(1) (1) (3)

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

1. m. pizz. arco *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco*

30 *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* *longer*

are one — are one — *longer*

3 *3* *2*

4 *4* *4*

sub p *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* *longer*

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

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

pizz. arco *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco*

mp *p* *pp*

35 *ppp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

one one one

2 3
4 4

ppp *camp*

ppp *pp* (sounds 8ve higher) *pp* (spec. norm) *pp* *ppp* *ppp*

pp *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

pp *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

37

pp *ppp* *camp*

pp *ppp*

pp *ppp*

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$\text{♩} = 90$

V

2
2

mute (within p dynamic)
p sempre, incisive, slightly off string

mute (within p dynamic)
p sempre, incisive, slightly off string

6

p con poco vibrato, simple, with a swing

I do not know which to prefer The

11

beau ty of in fle — He — He — He — He —

15

he chins or the

19

beau ty of inn u en dos

p

23

27

The black bird — whistling —

31

or just — af — ter —

35

pp

p ma intenso

I cicks filled the long window

mf *p* *mf*

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

p.d.l.t. *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

p *sempre p*

with bar baric glass (s)

sfz *sfz* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

mf *p* *mf* *sfz* *p* *mf* *sfz* *p*

mf *p* *mf*

The shadow ————— of the black bird

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

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

crossed it ————— to and fro

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

16

p *mp*

The mood _____

mf *p* *mf* *mf*

ripple hill

p sempre

p *mp* *mp* *p*

traced in the sha dow _____ an in _____ de ci - phorable

(*p sempre*)

(not spread)

p *pp*

cause (se)

VII

$\text{♩} = 108$

f incantatory, almost wild

short (enough time to prepare for a firm attack)

4
4

5
4

4
4

short

short

f sempre last.

5

cut off *shot* *f sempre*

0 thin men of

5
4

shot

f sempre, preciso

cut off *f sempre*

9

f

He damn 0 thin men of

più de la teble

fff *f*

f

Handwritten musical score for the first system. The top staff contains the vocal line with lyrics: "Ha ddam O hin men of Ha". The music is in 3/4 time. The second and third staves show guitar accompaniment with various effects and dynamics. The fourth staff is empty.

Lyrics: Ha ddam O hin men of Ha

Effects: *près de la table*, *pos. norm.*, *près de la table*, *pos. norm.*

Dynamics: *f*, *effz*, *f*, *effz*, *f*

Time signature: 3/4

Handwritten musical score for the second system. The top staff contains the vocal line with lyrics: "ddam Why do you i ma gine". The music is in 3/4 time. The second and third staves show guitar accompaniment with various effects and dynamics. The fourth staff is empty.

Lyrics: ddam Why do you i ma gine

Effects: *près de la table*, *short*, *pos. norm.*, *sim.*

Dynamics: *f sempre*, *short*, *f*, *effz*, *f*, *(f)*, *f sempre*, *(f)*

Time signature: 3/4

Handwritten musical score for the first system, measures 1-28. The score includes a vocal line with lyrics "i ma gine" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a 5/4 time signature and dynamic markings such as *f* and *on string*. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and phrasing slurs.

Handwritten musical score for the second system, measures 29-32. The vocal line continues with lyrics "gine why do you i ma gine". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings like *ff*, *mp*, and *f*, along with the instruction *ff sempre rest*. The score concludes with a final chord and the text "on string".

27 *subf* *ff sempre*

(gine ————— gol ————— den ————— birds ————— gol ————— den birds

f *f* *f* *f* *sm.*

subf *ff sempre*

f *f* *f* *f* *sm.*

3
4

31 *ff*

birds ————— birds? —————

3
4

f *f* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

f *f* *mf* *mf*

ff *f* *ff*

f *f* *mf* *mf*

35 *f sempre*

Do ————— you — not see —

3/4 4/4

p *p* *p* *p* *fmp* *sfmp* *sfmp*

mf *f* *mf* *f* *sf=mp* *f* *sf=mp* *f* *sf=mp*

p *p* *sf=mp* *f* *sf=mp*

39 *f*

Do ————— you

3/4 4/4

fmp *fmp* *f* *fmp*

mf *f* *sf=mp* *f* *sf=mp* *f* *sf=mp*

f *sf=mp* *sf=mp* *f* *sf=mp*

12 *ff sempre*
 not see how the

fmp *fmp* *ff* *fmp* *fmp* *ff* *fmp*

sfz *sm.* *sfz*

f *f = mp* *f* *ff = mf* *ff* *ff*

f *fmp* *f = mf* *ff* *fmp* *ff*

15 *ff*
 black bird the black bird the black bird

ff *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

sfz *sm.*

ff *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

ff *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

29 *ff sempre, very fast rhythmically*

Walks a round the feet of the women a boot you a round the feet

ff sempre on string

33 *ff sempre*

Of the women a boot you Of the women a boot

3 4
4 4

(ff)

(sfz)

57

you?

ff possibile

ff *cut off*

$\text{♩} = 120 (\text{♩} = 60)$

VII

7 6(5) 7 5 7 4

8 8(4) 8 8 8 8

pp resonant

pp resonant calm flowing

tasto flaut.

pp rich

tasto flaut.

pp rich

pp *non b₂*

6 *p=pp* *p=pp* *p=pp* *p=pp* *pp*

I know no ble accents — And lu cid inescapable

4 7 6(3) 7 5
8 8 8(4) 8 8

pp always remain

(sounds like high)

pp ringing

take time

pp

pp

pp

pp

10 *p* — *pp* *p=pp* *p=pp*

rhym thms — But I know too

5 3 4 7 3/6
8 8 8 8 4(8)

pp sempre

take time

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp $\text{—} p \text{—} pp$ $pp \text{—} p \text{—} pp$ $p \text{—} pp$
 that the black bird is in_volved in_volved

$\frac{3}{4}$
 $\frac{8}{8}$
 (pp)

(pp)

pp $\text{—} p \text{—}$ $\text{—} p \text{—}$ pp $\text{—} p \text{—}$
 pp $\text{—} p \text{—}$ pp $\text{—} p \text{—}$ pp $\text{—} p \text{—}$ pp $\text{—} p \text{—}$

$p \text{—} pp$ *allegro*
 in_volved in what I know *allegro*

pp *allegro*

(pp) pp *scapric* *allegro*

pp pp

pp pp *allegro*

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♩=120

IX

Handwritten musical score for the first system, featuring five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The second staff is a piano accompaniment. The third staff is a solo part. The fourth staff is a guitar part. The fifth staff is a bass part. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff possibile*, *mf*, and *ffz*. Time signatures are 4/8, 3/8, and 6/8. Handwritten annotations include "4 3 8+16", "3 3 8+16", and "6 8".

Handwritten musical score for the second system, featuring five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "When the black bird — flew out — of sight — (+)". The second staff is a piano accompaniment. The third staff is a solo part. The fourth staff is a guitar part. The fifth staff is a bass part. The score includes dynamic markings such as *sempre ff wild*, *ff possibile*, *mf*, and *ffz*. Time signatures are 6/8 and 8/8. Handwritten annotations include "3", "7 3 8", and "6 8".

Handwritten musical score for the first system, measures 6-8. The score includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sixteenth notes. Handwritten annotations include "6/8", "5/8", and "11/8 + 3/16". Performance markings include "ff", "pizz norm.", "mf", "ff possibile", and "subff".

Handwritten musical score for the second system, measures 9-11. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics: "It marked the edge of one of many". The piano accompaniment continues with complex rhythmic patterns. Handwritten annotations include "11/8 + 3/16", "9/8", "ff sempre", "pizz norm.", "mf", "ff", and "sul part arco".

ff possibile

mf, f

cir _____ cles _____ cles _____

9 5 12
8 8 8

ff _____ *mf* _____ *sub ff* _____ *mf* _____

ff _____ *mf* _____

sol part _____ *pos non.* _____ *sol part.* _____ *pos non.* _____

ff _____ *mf* _____

both b pos non. _____ *ff* _____ *mf* _____

f *dim.* _____ *pp* _____

f *dim.* _____ *pp* _____ *damp* *immediately* _____

sol part. _____ *tact.* _____

f *dim.* _____ *pp* _____

b pos non. _____ *f* *dim.* _____ *pp* _____

affera

affera

affera

affera

affera

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff. The lyrics are "would cry out sharp-". Above the staff, there is a dynamic marking *al massimo* and a fermata over the word "cry". The word "sharp-" is followed by a double sharp symbol ($\sharp\sharp$).

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff. The tempo marking is $\text{♩} = 90$ *rit.*. The dynamics are *f*, *fast dim.*, *p*, and *pp*. The word "ly" is written below the staff. The word "attaca." is written below the staff at the end of the phrase.

Ⅺ

$\text{♩} = 84$

Handwritten musical score for a piano accompaniment. It consists of five staves. The first two staves are for the right hand, and the last three are for the left hand. The tempo is $\text{♩} = 84$. The first two staves are marked *pp delicatiss.* and have the instruction "(accents with pp dynamic)". The bottom staff has dynamics *p:pp*, *ppp*, and *sim.* (sostenuto).

Musical score for the first system, featuring vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ppp* and *ppp sm.*

Musical score for the second system, including lyrics and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "He rode o-ver the moun-tain in a glass coach". The score includes dynamic markings such as *p sempre marcato*, *mp*, *ppp*, and *ppp sm.*

10 *mf*

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

eb mf sempre very taut slightly off string

mf:mp *mf:mp* *mf:mp* *mf:mp* *mf:mp* *mf* *very taut slightly off string*

15 *ppcf* *ritando*

ppcf *ritando* *f*

Once — a — fear — pier — cer — cer — piercer — him

ppcf

ppcf

ppcf

ppcf

mf

In that he mis took _____ the sha _____ dow of his e _____ qui _____

f

f

f

ff

page _____ For black _____

cresc.

ff driving forward

ff driving forward

ff driving forward

ff driving forward

cresc.

cresc.

ff driving forward

ff driving forward

8

3/8 2/8 3/8

pp *mp*

pp *mp*

15

3/8 5/8 3/8

p *p* *p* *mp*

pp *p* *mp*

22

2/8 3/8 5/16

p *mp* *sub p*

p *mp* *sub p*

72 (mp)

fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing

p *p* *sempre dim.*

p *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *p* *sempre dim.*

p *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *p* *sempre dim.* (1x)

XIII

$\text{♩} = 42$

p very still

It was evening

5 3 5

4 4 4

pp *preciso* *pp*

(sounds like hyphen)

p *preciso* *p*

pp *calmo possibile* *pp*

pp *calmo possibile* *pp*

all af-ter noon

pp dim più

slow glia

temple bell

p chiaro

marimba

pp

bass

p chiaro

pp chiaro

violin

p

pp

(piano)

pp

p

pp

pp

p

pp

p non più sempre calmo

It was

marimba

temple bell

pp

p

pp

p

p

pp

p

pp

pp

p

pp

pp

p

pp

pp

p

pp

pp

p

pp

10 (p)

Snow *ing* snow *ing*

pp p

p pp (pp)

p pp p

p pp p

12

snow *ing*

pp p

pp p (p)

pp p

pp p

pp p

5
4

5

4

And.

p *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

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

p *pp*

p *ppp* *ppp* *sim*

- it was go - ing to snow to

p *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

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

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

p non più cant. ma poco vibr.

pp

ppp *sim*

19

pp possibile

snow to snow

pp

temple bell *p*

pp sempre, charriss.

p

pp (trm.)

21

p immobile

the black bird sat

ppp *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *pp* *p* *pp* *p*

pp

pp

pp *pp sempre*

ppp

tasto (al fine)
pp *p* *pp*
sempre con un poco vibr.

tasto (al fine)
pp *p*
sempre con un poco vibr.

in the ce — dar limbs the black — bird — sat —

Handwritten musical score for the first system, measures 1-16. The vocal line features lyrics: "in the ce — dar limbs the black — bird — sat —". Dynamics include *sub p*, *pp*, and *p*. The piano accompaniment includes markings such as *pp*, *p*, *subp*, and *pp*. There are also notes like "triple left" and "triple right" with arrows pointing to specific notes.

in the ce — dar limbs the ce — dar

Handwritten musical score for the second system, measures 17-24. The vocal line continues with lyrics: "in the ce — dar limbs the ce — dar". Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *pp*. The piano accompaniment includes markings such as *pp*, *p*, and *pp*. There are also notes like "triple left" and "triple right" with arrows pointing to specific notes. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is overlaid on the page.

Rit

largo

Handwritten musical score for voice and piano. The score is written on five staves. The lyrics are: "limbs the ce - dar limbs". The music includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, *ppp*, and *ppp possible*. Performance instructions include "pp always dying away", "Rit", "ppk tail", and "damp with voice". The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and 3/4 time signatures. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is overlaid diagonally across the page.

Conch Hill, London: Seating, Chie 23 August 1945
 Halden