

Hongwei Cai

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# How Soon Hath Time

on John Milton's sonnet  
for mixed chorus divisi a cappella  
(2021)



## How soon hath Time

by John Milton (1608-1674)

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,  
 Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!  
 My hasting days fly on with full career,  
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.  
 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,  
 That I to manhood am arrived so near,  
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear,  
 That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.  
 Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,  
 It shall be still in strictest measure even  
 To that same lot, however mean or high,  
 Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;  
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,  
 As ever in my great Taskmaster's eye.

Duration: c. 5 min

*text is in the public domain*

mormorando used in this piece:

A - as in **ah**

O - as in **open**

M - with closed lips

# How Soon Hath Time

for mixed chorus divisi a cappella

John Milton (1608-1674)

Hongwei Cai

**♩ = c.76** **rit.** . . . . .

**SOPRANO**

*f* How soon *p* *mf* the sub-tle thief of youth,

**ALTO**

*f* How soon *p* *mf* the sub-tle thief of youth,

*mf* *f* *p*

**TENOR**

*mf* *f* *mp* *mf*

*mf* *f* *mp*

**BASS**

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

**Piano (rehearsal only)**

*f* *mf*

**A tempo**

2

5

**S.**

*p* *f* *mp*

O A Sto - len my three and twen-ti - eth

*p* *f* *mp*

Sto - len my three and twen-ti - eth

**A.**

*p* *mp* *f* *mp*

O A on his wing my three and twen-ti - eth

*p* *mp* *f* *p*

O on his wing A

**T.**

*mp* *mf* *p*

youth, O A O

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

O O A O

**B.**

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

O O A O

*mf* *p*

A O

**Pno.**

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

*3*

The musical score is for a four-part vocal ensemble (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano. It is in 4/4 time and consists of four measures. The Soprano and Alto parts have lyrics. The Tenor and Bass parts have lyrics. The Piano part has dynamics and a triplet in the fourth measure.

rit.

Più mosso  $\text{♩} = c.90$ 

SOLO (or 3 SOLI)

9

S.

year! *p* *pp* *mf* my hast-ing days\_

A.

year! *p* *pp* *mp* *p* my\_

M. *mp* *pp* *mp* *p* my\_

T.

M. *mp* *pp* my three and twen-ti - eth year!

B.

M. *mp* *pp*

M. *mp* *pp*

Pno.

*pp* *mf*

13

The musical score is for a piece titled "Fly on with full career". It is written for voice and piano. The score is divided into four systems. The first system shows the vocal melody for part A and the piano accompaniment. The second system shows the vocal melody for part B and the piano accompaniment. The third system shows a piano solo for the piano part. The fourth system shows the vocal melody for part A and the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "fly on with full ca - reer But my late spring no my hast-ing days\_ on\_ days\_ on\_".

fly on with full ca - reer But my late spring no

A.

fly\_ my

fly\_ my

SOLO (or 3 SOLI)

*mf*

my hast-ing days\_ fly on with full ca - reer

B.

*p*

days\_ on\_

*p*

days\_ on\_

Pno.

17

bud or blos-som shew - eth

A.

spring

spring

But my late spring no bud or blos-som shew - eth

B.

no shew - - eth

no shew - - eth

Pno.

The musical score is written for a song, page 5. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system (A.) has a vocal line and two piano accompaniment lines. The second system (B.) has a vocal line and two piano accompaniment lines. The third system (Pno.) has a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: 'bud or blos-som shew - eth', 'spring', 'spring', 'But my late spring no bud or blos-som shew - eth', 'no shew - - eth', 'no shew - - eth'.



20 TUTTI

S.

*f* per-haps might de-ceive the truth\_ *mf* to man-hood\_

A.

*f* per-haps might de-ceive the truth\_ *mf* to man-hood\_

*mf* my sem blance *mp* That I am a-rived so near,\_

*mf* my sem blance\_ *mp* That I am a-rived so near,\_

T.

*f* per-haps might de-ceive the truth\_ *mf* to man-hood\_

*f* per-haps might de-ceive the truth\_ *mf* to man-hood\_

B.

*mf* my sem blance\_ *mp* That I am a-rived so near,\_

*mf* my sem blance\_ *mp* That I am a-rived so near,\_

Pno.

*f* *mp*

24

*mp*

S.

my hast-ing days\_

fly on with full ca-reer

*mp*

my hast-ing days\_

A

*p*

A.

my\_

fly\_

*p*

my\_

fly\_

*mp*

T.

my hast-ing days\_

A

fly on with full ca

*mp*

A

*p*

B.

days\_

on\_

*p*

days\_

on\_

Pno.

*mf*

#8

#8

#8

28

S. But my late spring no bud or blos-som shew - eth M

O M

A. my spring

my spring

T. reer A But my late spring no

O A But my late spring no

B. no

no

Pno.

31

S.

bud or blos-som shew - eth And in-ward ripe - ness doth much less ap - pear,

A.

bud or blos-som shew - eth And in-ward ripe - ness doth much less ap - pear,

T.

bud or blos-som shew - eth M

bud or blos-som shew - eth M A

B.

shew - - - eth M

shew - - - eth M A

Pno.

*p*

34

S.

M

*mp* 3 much less ap-pear, *mf* That

A

M A

A.

M

*mp* 3 much less ap-pear, *mf* That

M A

T.

*p* 3 And in-ward ripe-ness doth much less ap-pear, *mp* 3 much less ap-pear,

*p* *mp* M A

B.

*p* 3 And in-ward ripe-ness doth much less ap-pear, *mp* 3 much less ap-pear,

*p* *mp* M A

Pno.

*mp* 3 *mf*

38

**S.**

*mf* some more time-ly-hap-py *f* spir - its *mp* en - du - eth. *pp* en -

**A.**

*mf* some more time *f* spir - its en-dueth *mp* en - du - eth. *pp* en -

**T.**

*mf* some time *f* spir - its *mp* en - du - eth. *pp* en -

**B.**

*mf* some time *f* spir - its *mp* en - du - eth. *pp* en -

**Pno.**

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

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 38-41. It features four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'some more time-ly-hap-py spir - its en - du - eth. en -'. The piano part includes triplets and dynamic markings. The tempo is marked 'rit.' (ritardando). The vocal parts have dynamic markings: *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). The piano part has dynamic markings: *f*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. The piano part also includes triplets and a crescendo/decrescendo hairpin.

Tempo I ♩=c.76

rit. . . . . 12

43

S.

du - eth. How soon\_ hath Time, the sub-tle thief of

*ff* *p* *mf*

A.

du - eth. How soon\_ hath Time,

*ff* *p*

T.

du - eth. How soon\_ hath Time,

*ff* *p*

B.

du - eth. How soon\_ hath Time,

*ff* *p* *pp*

Pno.

*ff* *mf*

## A tempo

rit.

48

S.

youth, \_\_\_\_\_ *pp* *f* *p*

Sto-len on his wing

A.

\_\_\_\_\_ *pp* *f* *p*

Sto-len on his wing

T.

\_\_\_\_\_ *pp* *f* *mf*

Sto - len on his wing my three and twen-ti-eth

B.

\_\_\_\_\_ *pp* *f* *p*

Sto - len on his wing

Pno.

*f* *mf*

Sto - len on his wing



Meno mosso ♩=c.68

14

52

S.

*mp* *pp* *p*

M or soon or slow,

A.

*mp* *pp* *p*

M or soon or slow,

T.

*mp* *p*

year! O It

B.

*mp* *p*

M Yet be it less or more,

Pno.

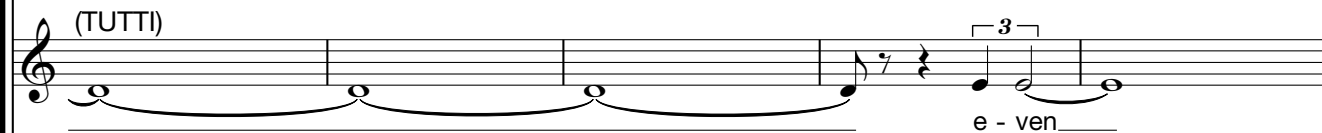
*mp*

57

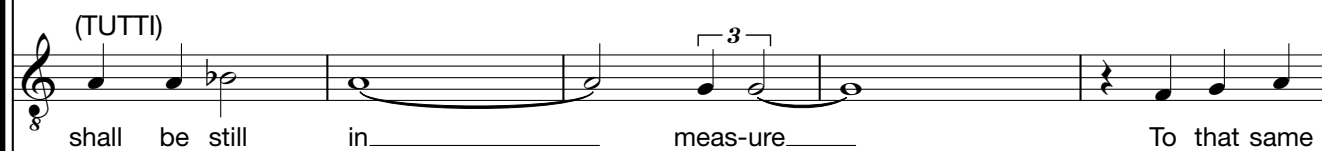
(TUTTI)



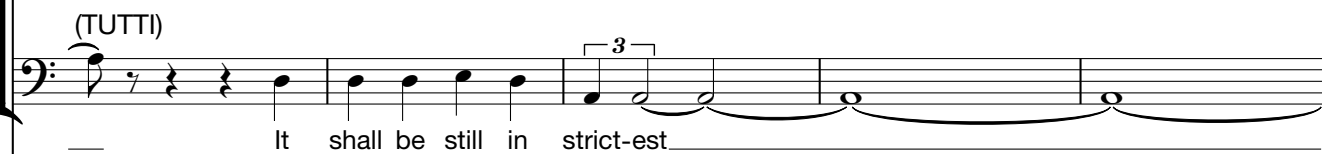
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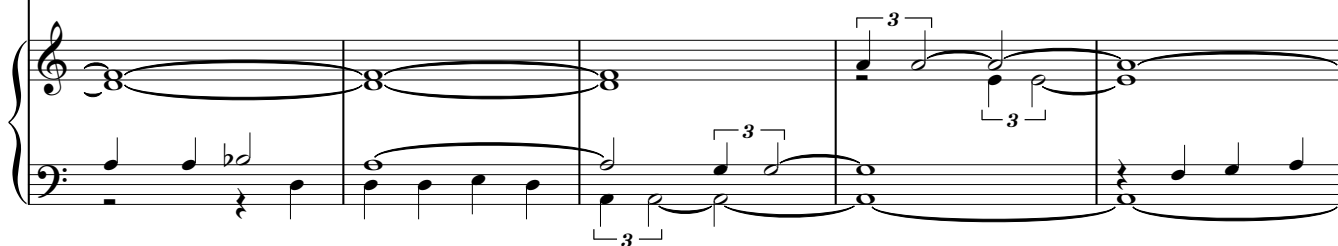
(TUTTI)



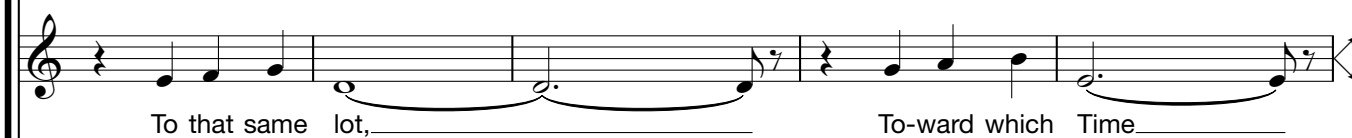
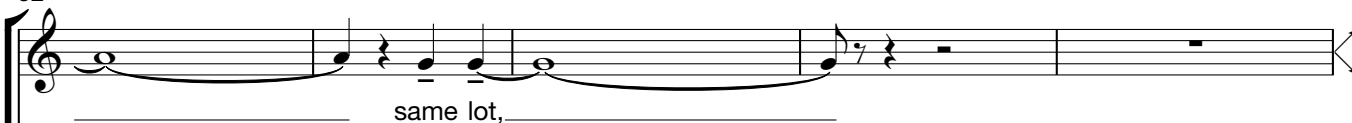
(TUTTI)



Pno.



62



Pno.





Tempo I ♩=c.76

18

71

**S.**

*pp* // *ff* *p* *pp*

All is,

**A.**

*pp* // *ff* *p* *pp* 3

All is, to

**T.**

*pp* // *ff* *p* *mf* 3 3

All is, if I have grace to use it so.

**B.**

*pp* // *ff* *pp*

All is,

**Pno.**

// *ff* *mf* 3

76

*mp* 3 *p* *f*

S. use it so ev - er in my

*mp* 3 *p* *f*

use it so ev - er in my

*mp* 3 *p* *f*

A. use it so ev - er in my great

*mp* 3 *p* *f*

use it so ev - er in my great

T. 8 *f* *f*

As ev - er in my great

*f* *f*

As ev - er in my great

B. *p* *f* *p*

As ev - er A

*p* *f* *p*

As ev - er A

Pno. *mp* 3 *f*

