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JULIANA HALL

# PROPRIETY

5 Songs for Soprano and Piano

on Poems by  
Marianne Moore

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Cover design by David Sims.

**MERCIFULLY**

I am hard to disgust,  
but a pretentious poet can do it;  
a person without a tap root; and  
impercipience can do it; did it.

But why talk about it—  
offset by Musica Antiqua's  
"Legendary Performance"  
of impassioned exactitude.

An elate tongue is music. . . .  
the plain truth—complex truth—  
in which unnatural emphases,  
"passi - on" and "divis - i-on,"  
sound natural. Play it all; do;  
except in uproars of conversation.

Celestial refrain. . . . My mind  
hears it again. Without music  
life is flat—bare existence.  
Dirgelike David and Absalom. That.  
Let it be that.

**CARNEGIE HALL: RESCUED**

"It spreads," the campaign—carried on  
by long-distance telephone,  
with "Saint Diogenes  
supreme commander."  
At the fifty-ninth minute  
of the eleventh hour, a rescuer

makes room for Mr. Carnegie's  
music hall, which by degrees  
became (becomes)  
our music stronghold  
(accented on the "né," as  
perhaps you don't have to be told).

Paderewski's "palladian  
majesty" made it a fane;  
Tschaikovsky, of course,  
on the opening  
night, 1891;  
and Gilels, a master, playing.

With Andrew C. and Mr. R.,  
"our spearhead, Mr. Star"—  
in music, Stern—  
has grown forensic,  
and by civic piety  
has saved our city panic;

rescuer of a music hall  
menaced by the "cannibal  
of real estate"—bulldozing potentate,  
land-grabber, the human crab  
left cowering like a neonate.

As Venice "in defense of children"  
has forbidden for the citizen,  
by "a tradition of  
noble behavior,  
dress too strangely shaped or scant,"  
posterity may impute error

to our demolishers of glory. Jean Cocteau's "Preface  
to the Past" contains the phrase  
"When very young my dream  
was of pure glory."  
Must he say "was" of his "light  
dream," which confirms our glittering story?

They need their old brown home. Cellist,  
violinist, pianist—  
used to unmusical  
impenetrabilia's  
massive masonry—have found  
reasons to return. Fantasias

of praise and rushings to the front  
dog the performer. We hunt  
you down, Saint Diogenes—  
are thanking you for glittering,  
for rushing to the rescue  
as if you'd heard yourself performing.

**DREAM**

*After coming on Jerome S. Shipman's comment concerning academic appointments for artists.*

The committee—now a permanent body—  
formed to do but one thing,  
discover positions for artists, was worried, then happy;  
rejoiced to have magnetized Bach and his family  
“to Northwestern,” besides five harpsichords  
without which he would not leave home.  
For his methodic unmetronomic melodic diversity  
contrapuntally appointedly persistently  
irresistibly Fate-like Bach—find me words.

Expected to create for university  
occasions, inventions with wing,  
was no trouble after master-classes (stiffer in Germany),  
each week a cantata; chorales, fugues, concerti!  
Here, students craved a teacher and each student worked.  
Jubilation! Re-rejoicings! Felicity!  
Repeated fugue-like, all of it, to infinity.  
(Note too that over-worked Bach was not irked.)

Haydn, when he had heard of Bach's billowing sail,  
begged Prince Esterházy to lend him to Yale.  
Master-mode expert fugue-al forms since, prevail.

Dazzling nonsense . . . I imagine it? Ah! nach  
enough. J. Sebastian—born at Eisenach:  
its coat-of-arms in my dream: BACH PLAYS BACH!

**MELCHIOR VULPIUS**

*c. 1560–1615.*

a contrapuntalist—  
composer of chorales  
and wedding-hymns to Latin words  
but best of all an anthem:  
“God be praised for conquering faith  
which feareth neither pain nor death.”

We have to trust this art—  
this mastery which none  
can understand. Yet someone has  
acquired it and is able to  
direct it. Mouse-skin-bellows'-breath  
expanding into rapture saith

“Hallelujah.” Almost  
utmost absolutist  
and fugue-ist, Amen; slowly building  
from miniature thunder,  
crescendos antidoting death—  
love's signature cementing faith.

**PROPRIETY**

is some such word  
as the chord  
Brahms had heard  
from a bird,  
sung down near the root of the throat;  
it's the little downy woodpecker  
spiraling a tree—  
up up up like mercury;  
a not long  
sparrow-song  
of hayseed  
magnitude—  
a tuned reticence with rigor  
from strength at the source. Propriety is  
Bach's Solfegietto—  
harmonica and basso.

The fish-spine  
on firs, on  
somber trees  
by the sea's  
walls of wave-worn rock—have it; and  
a moonbow and Bach's cheerful firmness  
in a minor key.  
It's an owl-and-a-pussy-

both-content  
agreement.  
Come, come. It's  
mixed with wits;  
it's not a graceful sadness. It's  
resistance with bent head, like foxtail  
millet's. Brahms and Bach,  
no; Bach and Brahms. To thank Bach

for his song  
first, is wrong.  
Pardon me;  
both are the  
unintentional pansy-face  
uncursed by self-inspection; blackened  
because born that way.

— *Marianne Moore*

Catalog No. 8586  
For my mother, Carolyn Jane Hall

# Propriety

for Soprano and Piano

## Mercifully

Marianne Moore

Juliana Hall  
(b. 1958)

Energetically (♩ = 108)

The image shows the first system of a musical score for piano. It consists of three staves: a vocal line (Soprano) and two piano accompaniment staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Energetically' with a quarter note equal to 108 beats per minute. The first system contains measures 1 through 4. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). A large watermark 'Reviewing is illegal copy only' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

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7 *ff*

I am

9

hard to dis-gust, but a pre-ten-tious

*f*

12 *f*

po-et can do it; a per-son with-out a tap root;

*f*

# Carnegie Hall: Rescued

Marianne Moore

Juliana Hall

(b. 1958)

1 Excited (♩ = 112)

*f*

“It

4

spreads,”

7

the cam-paign

car-ried on

by

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10 *f*

long - dis - tance tel - e - phone, with "Saint Di - o - ge - nes

*f*

12 *ff* *fff* *p* Suspenseful

su - preme com - man - der." At the

Suspenseful

*ff* *fff* *p*

*Ped.* \* *Ped.* \* *Ped.* \*

14 *mf*

fif - ty - ninth min - ute of the e - lev - enth

*mf*



7 *f* *ff*

was wor-ried, — then hap-py; re-joiced to have

9 *f*

mag - ne - tized Bach and his fam - i - ly “to North - west - ern,”

11

be-sides five harp-si-chords with-out which he would not leave home.

# Propriety

Marianne Moore

Juliana Hall

(b. 1958)

**Delicately** (♩ = 112-116)

*pp*

1

is some such word as the

*pp*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

3

chord Brahms had heard from a

*p*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

6

bird, sung down near the root of the

*p*

Ped. \*

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9 *mp*

throat; it's the lit - tle down - y

11

wood - peck - er spi - ral - ing a tree

13 *mf* *f*

up up up like mer - cu - ry;

## Melchior Vulpus

Marianne Moore

Juliana Hall

(b. 1958)

1 **With warmth** ( $\text{♩} = 60$ )

*mp* *p*

a con - tra - pun - ta - list com - pos - er of cho -

3 *mp*

rales and wed - ding - hymns to Lat - in words

5 *mf*

but best of all an an - them: "God be praised for

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system (measures 1-4) is in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 60. The vocal line starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The piano accompaniment consists of chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-G4, and A4-C5. The second system (measures 5-8) is in 4/4 time. The vocal line has a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The piano accompaniment consists of chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-G4, and A4-C5. The third system (measures 9-12) is in 3/4 time. The vocal line has a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The piano accompaniment consists of chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-G4, and A4-C5.

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8

con - quer - ing faith which fear - eth nei - ther

10

pain nor death." We have to trust this

12

art this mas - ter - y which none can un - der - stand.

*mp*

*mf*

*mf*