

Birthday Quartet

for Violin, Viola,
Violoncello, and Piano

Violin



Bill Robinson

2 Violin Birthday Quartet (Piano Quartet version)
And they're off (♩ = 80) I. How Long? Not Long [7:30] Bill Robinson

Musical score for Violin, measures 2-45. The score is written in treble clef and 4/4 time. It features various dynamics including *ff*, *p*, *pp*, and *ff*. The piece includes several time signature changes: 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 3/2, and 4/4. The score is divided into systems with measure numbers 2, 6, 11, 18, 25, 30, 33, 36, and 45. The notation includes eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and slurs. A fermata is present over a note in measure 36.

Birthday Quartet Mov. 1

48 3

50 *ff*

52 *mp* *p* *pp* | *ff*

56 *p* | *ff*

61 *mp*

65 *ff*

69 *rit.* ----- *Adagio* (♩ = 56) *pp*

77 *mp*

82 *Tempo I* (♩ = 80) *mp*

Birthday Quartet Mov. 1

4

88 *pp* *p* *mp* *cresc. p. a p.*

94 (*mf*) (*f*) *ff*

99

103

107 *ff* *p*

112

120

127 *ff*

133

136 *8va*

140 (*8va*) *pp*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score for 'Birthday Quartet Mov. 1' contains ten staves of music, numbered 88 to 140. The music is written in treble clef with various time signatures including 3/4, 4/4, 2/4, 3/2, and 4/2. The score features a variety of dynamics, starting with *pp* (pianissimo) at measure 88 and reaching *ff* (fortissimo) at measure 107. There are also markings for *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *f* (forte), and *cresc. p. a p.* (crescendo piano ad piano). The piece includes several melodic lines with slurs and ties, and some passages marked with *8va* (octave) above a dashed line. The score concludes with a *pp* marking at measure 140.

II. Gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi swaha

[7']

Adagio mahayana (♩. = 40)

Violin

The score is written for a violin in G major, 6/4 time, with a tempo of Adagio mahayana (♩. = 40). It consists of nine staves of music. The first staff begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a dotted half note G4, and a whole note G4, all marked *p*. The second staff starts at measure 6 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *mp*. The third staff starts at measure 11 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *f*. The fourth staff starts at measure 15 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *p*. The fifth staff starts at measure 18 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *ff*. The sixth staff starts at measure 22 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *p*. The seventh staff starts at measure 26 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *pp*. The eighth staff starts at measure 31 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *ff*. The ninth staff starts at measure 35 with a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, and a half note C5, marked *ff*. The score includes various dynamics, articulation marks, and a repeat sign at the end.

6

11

15

18

22

26

31

35

p

mp

f

ff

pp

ff

6

Birthday Quartet Mov. 2

6
45 *p*

49 *f*

53 *f* *p*

58 *mp* *p* *pp*

63 *ff*

67 *pp* 2

71 *ff* ($\bullet = \bullet$)

77

84 *ff* *p* ($\bullet = \bullet$)

90

Detailed description: This page of a musical score for 'Birthday Quartet Mov. 2' contains ten staves of music. The first staff (measures 45-48) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a melodic line with a long, dashed slur. The second staff (measures 49-52) is marked *f* and contains a series of chords. The third staff (measures 53-57) starts with *f*, then *p*, and includes a fermata. The fourth staff (measures 58-62) shows dynamics of *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. The fifth staff (measures 63-66) is marked *ff*. The sixth staff (measures 67-70) is marked *pp* and includes a first ending bracket labeled '2'. The seventh staff (measures 71-76) is marked *ff* and includes a dynamic marking ($\bullet = \bullet$). The eighth staff (measures 77-83) is marked *ff* and includes a dynamic marking ($\bullet = \bullet$). The ninth staff (measures 84-89) is marked *ff* and *p*. The tenth staff (measures 90-93) continues the melodic line.

III. Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord [7:10]

Picco di montagna (♩ = 96)

non stacc.

Violin

mp

4

cresc. ----- *(mf)* ----- *f* -----

7

ff

11

ff ----- *p*

17

3 2

p cresc. p. a p.

25

(mp) *(mf)* *f*

29

2

ff

35

38

41

Birthday Quartet Mov. 3

43

46

55

62

69

77

82

86

89

94

Birthday Quartet Mov. 3

10

103 *p*

110 *pp* *pp* *f*

117

126 *cresc.*

132 *ff*

137 *mp+* *mf* *f*

145 *ff*

152 *mf cresc.*

157 *f* *ff*

162 *ff*

166

170

173 *ff dim.* *p* *pizz.* *pp*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score for 'Birthday Quartet Mov. 3' contains ten staves of music, numbered 103 to 173. The notation is in treble clef with various time signatures (3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4). The music features a variety of dynamics, including piano (*p*), pianissimo (*pp*), fortissimo (*ff*), mezzo-forte (*mf*), and mezzo-piano (*mp+*). Performance markings include accents, crescendos, and a pizzicato (*pizz.*) instruction. The score shows melodic lines with slurs and ties, as well as rhythmic patterns and rests.

I still have dream (♩=60)

Violin

p

7

p *accel.*

Table of brotherhood (♩=74)

14

cresc. p. a p. (*mp*) (*mf*) (*f*)

18

ff

24

ff *ff* *mp* *pp*

32

mf *f*

36

39

ff

43

47

51

rit. *Tempo I* (♩=60) *ff* *p*

Birthday Quartet Mov. 4

12

58

p

63

pp

69

Let Freedom Ring (♩ = 86)

ff

74

79

ff

83

ff

89

ff

93

ff *p*

98

103

p *mf*

110

ff

117

f

122

ff

124

126

(♩=60) Tempo I

fff *p*

131

Birthday Quartet Mov. 4

14

136

p

141

145 **Tempo III** (♩ = 86)

150

156

p *mf* *ff*

164

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

ff

177

179

181

fff

(♩ = 80)
Thank God Almighty

Birthday Quartet

for Violin, Viola,
Violoncello, and Piano

Viola



Bill Robinson

Birthday Quartet

for Violin, Viola, Violoncello, and Piano

Composed May 9—October 20, 2013; Aug. 29—October 5, 2015

Duration: about 30 minutes

In early 2010, I had a peculiar dream of a respectful conversation with Elvis Presley. He said I should write a symphony based on speeches by Martin Luther King Jr. Well—who can refuse the King of Rock and/or Roll? Especially since I share my birthday, January 15, with MLK, and classical radio stations frequently play a composer's music on his birthday.

The speeches of Martin Luther King are copyrighted, and the MLK Center is notoriously litigious. Thus this cannot be a choral work, nor can it have direct references to texts in the score. Instead I use the rhythms and inflections from speeches that are incorporated in themes. The first movement uses a few phrases from the “How long? Not long” speech of March 25, 1965 at the Alabama State Capitol. The second movement is based on the Buddhist mantra “Gate gate, paragate, parasamgate, bhodi swaha”; this can be roughly translated (as by Ram Dass) as “Beyond, beyond the beyond, beyond the beyond the beyond, hail the goer.” The third movement returns to MLK and uses bits of the “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech given on April 3, 1968 in Memphis Tennessee. The first version of the fourth movement (started writing it Aug. 28, 2013) used the final section of the Dream Speech given at the March on Washington on August 28, 1968, with narrator. After hearing the chamber version, I thought this first version of the fourth movement was not suitable, and I withdrew it.

On August 29, 2015, I started writing a second version of the last movement. The beginning uses the rhythm of the words “And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.’ I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.” The music then departs from the text, with the motives from “table of brotherhood” and “I have a dream” used repeatedly. Next comes “Let freedom ring” along with other phrases from the speech. The movement closes with “Free at last, free at last (repeated), thank God almighty we are free at last!”

The premiere performance of this piece was of the chamber edition for violin, clarinet, cello and piano on February 18, 2014, with the original fourth movement, without narrator. I made this additional chamber version for piano quartet at the same time.

Accidentals hold through the measure and not beyond, and do not refer to other octaves. Sometimes I include courtesy accidentals to avoid confusion.

Bill Robinson

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cover photograph; March on Washington, August 28, 1963

Birthday Quartet (Piano Quartet version)

Viola

I. How Long? Not Long [7:30]

Bill Robinson

And they're off (♩ = 80)

ff p ff

6

10

ff mp pp p

19

pp

26

ff

31

35

41

44

47

Birthday Quartet Mov. 1

2

54

ff *p* *ff*

60

p

64

p

69

rit. ----- *Adagio* ($\text{♩} = 56$)

pp

77

p

83

Tempo I ($\text{♩} = 80$)

pp

90

p *mp* *cresc. p. a p.* (*mf*) *f*

96

ff

101

p

Birthday Quartet Mov. 1

103

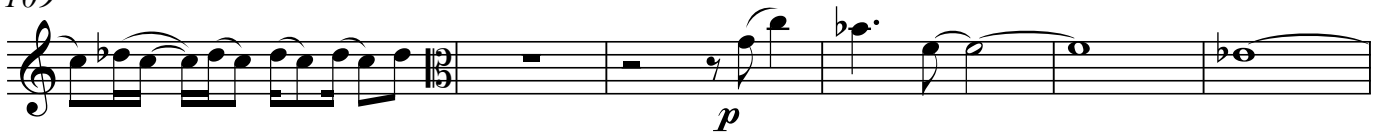
3



106



109



115



122



129



133



135



138



142



Adagio mahayana (♩ = 40)

Viola

3

p *mp*

8 *p* *f*

13 *p* *ff*

19

24 *p* *pp*

30 *ff*

35 2 *p*

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

46 *p* *f* 6

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

63 *ff* *pp*

68 *pp* | *ff* (♩ = ♩)

73 $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$

81

ff \curvearrowright *p*

88

96

p cresc. ----- (*mf*) ----- *f*

101

ff \curvearrowright *mf* \curvearrowright *mp* \curvearrowright *p*

108

mf \curvearrowleft

116

f *p cresc.* ----- *f* ----- *ff* G.P.

126

p *cresc. p. a p.* (*mp*)

134

(*mf*) *f* *ff*

139

144

ff \curvearrowright *mf* \curvearrowright *p*

149 *Meno mosso* $(\text{♩} = 30)$ *rit.*

pp *rit.*

Picco di montagna (♩ = 96)

Viola *mp* *non stacc.* *cresc.*

5 *(mf)* *f* *ff*

8

14 *ff* *p* *p cresc. p. a p.*

23 *(mp)* *(mf)* *f*

30 *ff*

35

39

43

47 *ff* *p*

127 *cresc.* -----

132 *ff*

137 *mp*

144 *mf* < *f* < *ff*

151 *ff*

155 *mf cresc.* ----- *f* ----- *ff*

161 *ff*

166 *ff*

170 *ff*

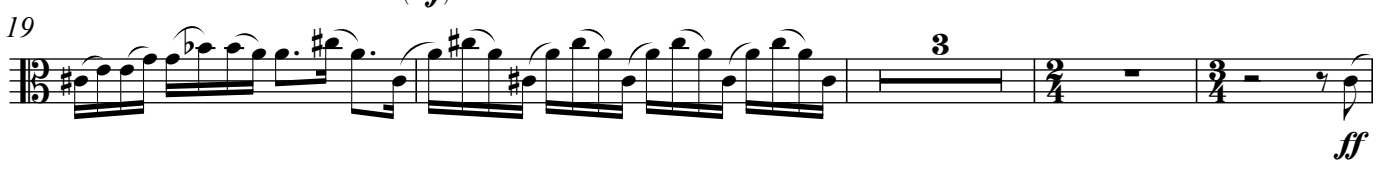
173 *ff dim.* ----- *p* ----- *pp*

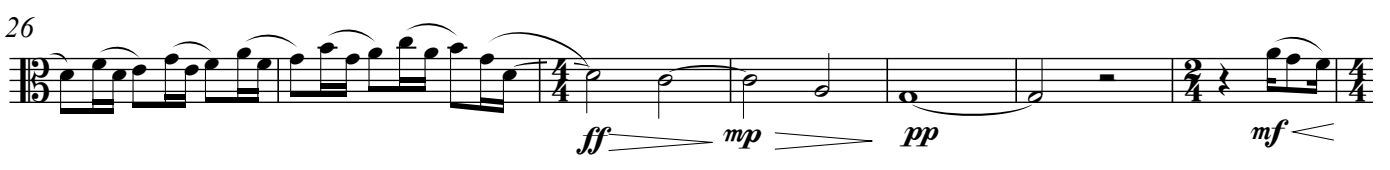
I still have dream (♩=60)

Viola 

10 

15 


19 

26 

33 

37 

40 

44 

48 

52 

10

61 *p* *pp*

68 **Let Freedom Ring** (♩ = 86) *ff*

75

80

86

91 *p*

96

102 *p* *mf*

110 *ff*

118 *f*

123 *ff*

126 *fff* *p* (♩=60) Tempo I

133

138

144 *pp* Tempo III (♩=86)

150

158 *p* *mf* *ff*

169 *ff* pizz. arco

176

179

181 *fff* Thank God Almighty (♩=80)

Birthday Quartet

for Violin, Viola,
Violoncello, and Piano

Violoncello



Bill Robinson

Cello

I. How Long? Not Long [7:30]

Bill Robinson

And they're off (♩ = 80)

Musical staff 1: Cello part, measures 1-5. Starts with a 4/4 time signature, changes to 3/4, then back to 4/4. Dynamics include *ff*, *p*, and *ff*.

Musical staff 2: Cello part, measures 6-10. Time signature changes to 2/4 and then 4/4.

Musical staff 3: Cello part, measures 11-17. Includes a double bar line with a '2' above it. Dynamics include *ff*, *p*, *pp*, and *p*.

Musical staff 4: Cello part, measures 18-25. Time signature changes to 3/2 and then 4/4. Dynamics include *pp*.

Musical staff 5: Cello part, measures 26-30. Dynamics include *ff*.

Musical staff 6: Cello part, measures 31-34. Time signature changes to 2/4 and then 4/4.

Musical staff 7: Cello part, measures 35-39. Includes a double bar line with a '2' above it.

Musical staff 8: Cello part, measures 40-42. Includes accents (>) over notes.

Musical staff 9: Cello part, measures 43-47. Includes accents (>) over notes.

46

49

ff *p*

58

63

67

69

rit. *ff*

72 Adagio (♩=56)

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

79

85

Tempo (♩=80)

pp

Birthday Quartet Mov. 1

4

92 *pizz.* *arco*
mp cresc. p. a p. *(mf)* *f* *ff*

98

104

107

112

119

127

133

137

139

141

Adagio mahayana (♩ = 40)

Cello

2

p

7

mp *p*

11

p

15 *f*

ff

20

pp

27

ff

31

36

p

40

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

48

f

51

2

Birthday Quartet Mov. 2

6
56

p *mp* *p*

Musical staff 56-60: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 56-60. Dynamics: *p*, *mp*, *p*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

61

pp *ff*

Musical staff 61-64: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 61-64. Dynamics: *pp*, *ff*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

65

pp

Musical staff 65-68: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 65-68. Dynamics: *pp*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

69

ff ($\text{♩}=\text{♩}$)

Musical staff 69-73: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 69-73. Dynamics: *ff*. Includes hairpins, slurs, and a tempo marking $(\text{♩}=\text{♩})$.

74

($\text{♩}=\text{♩}$)

Musical staff 74-80: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 74-80. Dynamics: *ff*. Includes hairpins, slurs, and a tempo marking $(\text{♩}=\text{♩})$.

81

p

Musical staff 81-88: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 81-88. Dynamics: *p*. Includes hairpins, slurs, and a fermata.

90

Musical staff 90-94: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 90-94. Includes hairpins and slurs.

95

p cresc.

Musical staff 95-98: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 95-98. Dynamics: *p cresc.*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

99

(mf) *f* *ff*

Musical staff 99-104: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measures 99-104. Dynamics: *(mf)*, *f*, *ff*. Includes hairpins and slurs.

103

mf *mp* *p*

114

p *mf* *f*

120

p *cresc.* *f* *ff*

125

G.P.

p

131

cresc. p. a p. *(mp)* *(mf)* *f*

136

ff

140

ff

144

ff *mf* *p* *pp*

149 *Meno mosso* (♩. = 30) *rit.*

ff *mf* *p* *pp*

8 III. Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord [7:10]

Picco di montagna (♩=96)

Cello *mp* *non stacc.*

4 *cresc.* ----- *(mf)*

6 *f* ----- *ff*

9

14 *ff* ----- *p*

21 *p cresc. p. a p.* ----- *(mp)* ----- *(mf)*

28 *f*

34 *ff*

38

41

44

ff \rightarrow p

Musical staff 44-48: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 44 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs. Measure 48 ends with a double bar line and a dynamic marking of *ff* with an arrow pointing to *p*.

49

Musical staff 49-55: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 49 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs.

56

Musical staff 56-62: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 56 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs.

63

p cresc. ----- *f*

Musical staff 63-69: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 63 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs. A dynamic marking of *p cresc.* is followed by a dashed line and then *f*.

70

mf \rightarrow *mp* \rightarrow *p*

Musical staff 70-75: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 70 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs. Dynamic markings *mf*, *mp*, and *p* are shown with arrows indicating a decrease in volume.

76

ff

Musical staff 76-82: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 76 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs. A dynamic marking of *ff* is present.

83

Musical staff 83-87: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 83 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs.

88

pizz. *ff* *mf*

Musical staff 88-92: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 88 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs. A dynamic marking of *ff* is followed by *mf*. The word *pizz.* is written above the staff.

93

arco *pp* *p*

Musical staff 93-97: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 93 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs. A dynamic marking of *pp* is followed by *p*. The word *arco* is written above the staff.

98

Musical staff 98-104: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 98 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs.

105

4

Musical staff 105-111: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Measure 105 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The staff contains a series of eighth notes with slurs. A dynamic marking of *pp* is followed by *p*. The number 4 is written above the staff.

I still have dream (♩=60)

Cello

p

6

11 *accel.* Table of brotherhood (♩=74)

p *cresc. p. a p.* *(mp)*

16

(mf) *f* *ff*

21

ff *mf* *ff*

29

mp *pp* *mp* *mf*

35

f

39

ff

44

48

52 *rit.* Tempo I (♩=60)

rit. *Tempo I* *(♩=60)* *p*

Birthday Quartet Mov. 4

12

58

p

62

66

Let Freedom Ring (♩ = 86)

pp *ff*

72

75

77

79

82

85

132 *p*

136

143 **Tempo III** (♩=86) *pp*

149

155 *p* *mf* *ff*

165

172 *pizz.* *ff* *arco*

178

180

182 **Thank God Almighty** (♩=80) *fff*