

Edward Henderson

imaginary song of a mechanical bird

for solo piano

Note

imaginary song of a mechanical bird was written in June 2013 in response to a RPS open commission for piano miniatures to accompany Messiaen's *Des canyons aux étoiles*.

Where Messiaen transcribes birdsongs, this piece is the elaborate song of a mechanical bird with only four notes to choose from. I aim to capture the unselfconscious expression of animal sounds coming into contact with the mechanical, relentless nature of the piano, an instrument that never takes a breath or has to re-bow.

The grace notes in bar 2 of *Des canyons* became a major feature of this work. I was inspired by the aggressive, percussive sound of the combined xylophone, glockenspiel and piano in bar 3.

Edward Henderson, London

July 2013

Performance time: c. 3 minutes

originally performed by Clare Simmonds at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, Monday 8th July 2013.

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2013

$\text{♩} = 72$
detached
pp *ppp* *mf* *pp*

3 *muttering*
3 3 3 3 3

5 *strident*
p *ff* 3

7 6

8 3 7 5 *p*

9 5 *fff* *pp*

10 *ff pp* *ff pp* *p* *ppp* 9 3

12 *fff* *f* *fff* *mp* *ff* 3 6

14 *f* *ff*

16 *3* *5* *6*

18 *3* *7* *6* *5* *6* *pp*

20 *ff* *p* *f* *pp*

22 *mp* *ff* *3* *6*

24 *p* *pp* *ff* *6*

26 *3* *3* *5* *3*

28 *3* *3* *6* *6*

30 *3* *7* *6* *6* *6*

32 *6*

33 *p* *f*

34 *mp* *mf* *ff*

36 *fff* *pp* *ff*

39 *ff* *fff*

40

41 *pp*

43 *mp* *ff* *mp*

depress silently, add 3rd ped., hold until end

add LH ped., hold until end

f *pp*

molto staccato

50 *ppp*