

Robinsongs

for Mezzo-Soprano,
Oboe, and Piano

(score for Electronic Music Readers)



Bill Robinson

Robinsongs

for Mezzo-Soprano, Oboe, and Piano

April 30—September 11, 2012

Duration: about 14 minutes

Cover photo: Parma Cathedral dome

for Joseph, Mary Kay, and Rebecca Robinson

Joseph and Mary Kay Robinson (no relation) came to a concert in 2006 featuring some of my music performed by Eric Pritchard at Duke University. Joe had a long career as principal oboist with the New York Philharmonic, and Mary Kay has performed extensively as a violinist. They asked me to write a trio for oboe, violin, and piano, which resulted in *Aditya Hridayam*. After they performed this at Duke with Thomas Warburton, I realized how lucky I was to work with musicians of this caliber. In February 2012, Mary Kay was one of the musicians performing my *Clarinet Sextet* for clarinet and strings, which was a wonderful performance.

In 2011, Joe and Mary Kay asked me to write a piece they could perform with their aspiring diva daughter Becky, with Mary Kay playing piano. I wrestled with ideas for lyrics for many months, but found this to be an exceptionally difficult assignment. After finishing *Violations* for viol consort (or string ensembles) on February 19, 2012, it was time to sit down to do *Robinsongs*, a set of songs for, well, the Robinsons. After delays and false starts with other lyrics, I managed to start scribbling Lewis Carroll's *Some Hallucinations* on April 30, but progress was quite difficult. After that came Ogden Nash's *The Purist*. (I've made a good-faith effort to find the holder of the copyright—but then, my music is so far from profitable that I don't suppose royalties will be an issue.) Finally, after much struggle and an uncommonly slow season of composition, came another Lewis Carroll poem, *You Are Old, Father William*, finished on the ominous date of September 11.

In August 2015 I made a new version of *Robinsongs* for mezzo, flute, clarinet, and piano, at the suggestion of Marianne Breneman, clarinetist and member of Conundrum, a chamber music group of soprano, flute, clarinet, and piano. In October 2022, I converted the legal-size format to letter-size, and for the oboe version, made a special score for electronic music readers.

Accidentals hold through the measure and not beyond, and do not refer to other octaves. Sometimes I include courtesy accidentals to avoid confusion. Notes retain their value through meter changes.

Bill Robinson

Publisher Parrish Press Garner NC Third Edition October 2022
billrobinsonmusic.com

Some Hallucinations

He thought he saw an Elephant,
That practiced on a fife:
He looked again, and found it was
A letter from his wife.
"At length I realize," he said,
"The bitterness of life."

He thought he saw a Buffalo
Upon the chimneypiece:
He looked again, and found it was
His Sister's Husband's Niece.
"Unless you leave this house," he said,
"I'll send for the Police!"

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek:
He looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
"The one thing I regret," he said,
"Is that it cannot speak!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
Descending from the 'bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus.
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
"There won't be much for us!"

—Lewis Carroll

The Purist

I give you now Professor Twist,
A conscientious scientist,
Trustees exclaimed, "He never bungles!"
And sent him off to distant jungles.
Camped on a tropic riverside,
One day he missed his loving bride.
She had, the guide informed him later,
Been eaten by an alligator.
Professor Twist could not but smile.
"You mean," he said, "a crocodile."

--Ogden Nash

You Are Old, Father William

"You are old, father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head--
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned
before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door--
Pray what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey
locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment--one shilling the box--
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too
weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the
beak--
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my
jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly
suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose--
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions and that is
enough,"
Said the father. "Don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs!"

---Lewis Carroll

Robinsongs

1. Some Hallucinations [5:20]

lyrics by Lewis Carroll

music by Bill Robinson

A perfectly sane tempo (♩ = 60)

Score for "1. Some Hallucinations" by Bill Robinson, lyrics by Lewis Carroll. The score is for Voice, Oboe, and Piano.

Tempo: A perfectly sane tempo (♩ = 60)

Key Signature: One flat (B-flat)

Time Signature: 3/4

Instrumentation: Voice, Oboe, Piano.

Score Structure:

- Measures 1-4:** Voice and Oboe have whole rests. The Piano part begins with a *p* (piano) dynamic, playing a rhythmic pattern in the right hand and a more complex pattern in the left hand. The left hand includes a *Red.* (Reduction) marking.
- Measures 5-8:** The Oboe enters with a melodic line marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The Piano continues its accompaniment.
- Measures 9-12:** The Oboe continues its melodic line. The Piano part features a *Red.* (Reduction) marking and a *** (asterisk) marking.

Copyright: © 2012

Some Hallucinations

The first system of the musical score for 'The Little Mermaid' features an Oboe (Ob.) and Piano (P) parts. The Oboe part begins with a melodic line in 2/4 time, marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The Piano part consists of a left hand playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment and a right hand playing a more complex melodic line, also marked *mp*. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

15

V. *p*

He thought he saw an El-e-phant, That prac-ticed on a fi-fe: He

Ob. *p*

15

p

8vb

19 *mp* *mf*

V. looked a-gain, and found it was A let-ter from his wife. "At length I re-a-lize," he said, "The bit-ter-ness of

Ob.

19 *mp* *mf*

P. *mp* *mf*

8^{vb}

Some Hallucinations

4

22 *f*

V. *life."*

Ob. *f* *ff*

22 *f* *ff*

(8^{vb}) - - -

24 *ff*

24 *ff* *mp*

26 *p*

V. *He thought he saw a Buf - fa - lo Up -*

Ob. *p*

26 *legato* *p*

Reo.

29 *cresc. p. a p.* (*mp*)
V. on the chim - ney - piece: He looked a - gain, and found it was His
Ob. *mp* *cresc. p. a p.*

29 *cresc. p. a p.* (*mp*)
P. *Leg.*

31 (*mf*)
V. Sis - ter's Hus - band's Niece. "Un - less you leave this house," he said, "I'll
Ob. (*mf*)

31 (*mf*)
P. *Leg.* *

33 *f* *ff*
V. send for the Po - - lice!"
Ob. *f* *ff*

33 *f* *ff*
P. *f* *ff*

Some Hallucinations

6

35

V.

Ob.

p *cresc. p. a p.*

mf *p* *cresc. p. a p.*

38

Ob.

(mp) *(mf)*

38

(mp) *(mf)*

40

V.

He thought he saw a Rat - tle - snake That ques - tioned him in

Ob.

f

40

f

7

46 *cresc.* *ff*

V. He looked a - gain, and found it was The Mid - dle of Next Week.

Ob. *cresc.* *ff*

46 *cresc.* *ff*

Leo. *

Some Hallucinations

8

This image shows a musical score for measures 49-52 of 'The Swan' from 'The Nutcracker'. The score is written for three staves: Violin (V.), Oboe (Ob.), and Piano (P.).

- Violin (V.):** The staff is empty for all four measures, indicating a rest.
- Oboe (Ob.):**
 - Measure 49: A half rest.
 - Measure 50: A half rest.
 - Measure 51: A half note G4, followed by a slur over a sixteenth-note triplet (F#4, E4, D4).
 - Measure 52: A half note D4, followed by a slur over a sixteenth-note triplet (C4, B3, A3).
- Piano (P.):**
 - Measure 49: A half note G3, followed by a slur over a sixteenth-note triplet (F#3, E3, D3).
 - Measure 50: A half note D3, followed by a slur over a sixteenth-note triplet (C3, B2, A2).
 - Measure 51: A half note G2, followed by a slur over a sixteenth-note triplet (F#2, E2, D2).
 - Measure 52: A half note D2, followed by a slur over a sixteenth-note triplet (C2, B1, A1).

The score includes dynamic markings: *mf* (mezzo-forte) at the beginning of measures 49 and 50, and *mp* (mezzo-piano) at the beginning of measures 51 and 52. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4.

This musical score is for the piece "The One Thing I Remember" by John Williams. It features three staves: Violin (V.), Oboe (Ob.), and Piano (P.). The Violin part begins at measure 53 with a melody marked *mp* and *cresc. p. a p.*. The Oboe part enters at measure 53 with a melodic line marked *cresc. p. a p.*. The Piano part is shown in grand staff notation, with both hands featuring complex rhythmic patterns and arpeggiated figures, marked *cresc. p. a p.*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

55

V. gret," he said, "Is that it can - - - not

Ob. (mf)

55

(mf)

Rec. Rec. Rec.

* (Crescendo)

57 *f*

V. *speak!"*

Ob. *f* *ff*

57 *f* *ff*

59

V.

Ob.

59 *ff* *8va*

62 *mp*

V. *He*

Ob. *p*

62 *p*

Leo.

Some Hallucinations

10

65

V. *thought he saw a Ban - ker's Clerk De - scen - ding from the 'bus: He*

Ob. *mp*

65 *mp* *Red.* *

67 *f*

V. *looked a - gain, and found it was A Hip - po - pot - a - mus.*

Ob. *f*

67 *f* *p* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *

71

V.

Ob. *p*

71 *8va* *8va* *8va*

The musical score is for a piece titled "Some Hallucinations". It features three staves: Vocal (V.), Oboe (Ob.), and Piano (P.). The score is divided into three systems, each starting with a measure number (65, 67, and 71). The Vocal part includes lyrics. The Oboe part has dynamic markings like *mp* and *f*. The Piano part includes dynamic markings like *mp*, *f*, and *p*, and has some notes marked with *Red.* and an asterisk (*). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

74 *mf* "If this should stay to

Ob. *mp* *mf*

74 *mp* *mf* *8va*

77 *f* *ff* dine," he said, "There won't be much for

Ob. *f* *ff*

77 *f* *ff* *8va*

79 us!"

Ob. *pp*

79 *p* *8va*

11. The Purist [3']

lyrics by Ogden Nash

music by Bill Robinson

Allegro academia (♩ = 120)

Score for "11. The Purist" (Allegro academia, 3/4 time, 120 bpm).

Instrumentation: Voice, Oboe, Piano.

Tempo and Dynamics: Allegro academia (♩ = 120). Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* (forte).

Lyrics: I give you now Pro-fes - sor

Structure: The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-7) features the Oboe and Piano. The second system (measures 8-16) features the Oboe and Piano. The third system (measures 17-24) features the Voice, Oboe, and Piano. The score ends with a double bar line and a fermata.

Key Signatures: The key signature changes from one flat (B-flat) to two flats (B-flat and E-flat) at measure 17.

Performance Notes: The Piano part includes the instruction *legato* in measure 10. The Oboe part includes the instruction *f* in measure 24. The Voice part includes the instruction *f* in measure 17.

Rehearsal Mark: A rehearsal mark is present at the end of the score, marked with an asterisk (*).

20

V. *Twist,* *A* con - sci - en - tious sci - en -

Ob.

20

22

V. *tist,* Trus - tees ex - claimed, "He ne - ver

Ob.

22

24

V. bun - gles!" *f* And

Ob.

24

27

V. sent him off to dis - tant jun - gles. And sent him off to dis - tant

Ob.

30

V. jun - gles.

Ob.

30

f

f

p

Red.

34

legato

37

V. *f* Camped on a tro - pic ri - ver - side,

Ob. *f*

37

f

Reo.

40

V. One day he missed his lov - ing bride. She

Ob.

40

Reo. Reo.

42

V. had, the guide in - formed him la - ter, Been

Ob.

42

Reo.

*

44 *ff*

V. eat - en by an al - li - ga - tor.

Ob. *ff* *ff* *dim. p. a p.*

ff *ff* *dim. p. a p.*

Reo.

47 *f* *(mf)* *(mp)*

Ob. *f* *(mf)* *(mp)*

f *(mf)* *(mp)*

Reo. Reo. Reo. Reo. Reo.

50 *p*

Ob. *p*

p

Reo. Reo. Reo. *

Ob. 55

mp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 55 through 61. The Oboe part (top staff) begins with a melodic line in 4/4 time, featuring eighth and quarter notes, and a half note. At measure 58, the time signature changes to 3/4. The Piano part (bottom staff) provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands. The dynamic marking *mp* (mezzo-piano) is indicated at measure 58.

Ob. 62

Detailed description: This system contains measures 62 through 67. The Oboe part continues its melodic line, which becomes more active in measures 65 and 66. The Piano part features sustained chords in the right hand and a more active bass line. The time signature changes to 9/8 at measure 65.

V. 68

f Pro -

Ob. 68

Detailed description: This system contains measures 68 through 74. The Violin part (top staff) has a long rest followed by a single note in measure 74, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Oboe part (middle staff) has a melodic line in measures 68-70 and then rests. The Piano part (bottom staff) features a complex texture with many chords in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line. The time signature changes to 12/8 at measure 71.

72

V. *ff*
fes - sor Twist could not but smile__ but smile__ but smile__ but smile__ but

Ob. *f* *ff*

72

75 *f* *rit.* *mf* *mp* *a tempo* *p*
smile__ but smile__ but smile but smile. "You

Ob. *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

75 *rit.* *a tempo*
f *mp* *p*

79
V. mean," he said, "a cro - - - co - - - - - dile."
Ob.

79

The musical score is written for three parts: Voice (V.), Oboe (Ob.), and Piano. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/8. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 72-74) features a vocal line with lyrics 'fes - sor Twist could not but smile__ but smile__ but smile__ but smile__ but' and a piano accompaniment. The second system (measures 75-78) continues the vocal line with lyrics 'smile__ but smile__ but smile but smile. "You' and includes dynamic markings *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and tempo changes *rit.* and *a tempo*. The third system (measures 79-82) features a vocal line with lyrics 'mean," he said, "a cro - - - co - - - - - dile."' and a piano accompaniment. The score concludes with a double bar line.

III. You Are Old, Father William [6']

19

lyrics by Lewis Carroll
music by Bill Robinson

Guano ma non troppo (♩ = 65)

Voice

Oboe

Piano

mp

"You are

p

Guano ma non troppo (♩ = 65)

V.

Ob.

5

mf

f

old, fa-ther Wil - liam," the young man said, "And your hair has be-come ve-ry white; _____ And

mp

mf

Reo. *

Reo. *

V.

Ob.

8

f

yet you in-ces - sant-ly stand on your head - - - - - Do you

f

Reo. *

Father William

20

12

V. *f*
think, at your age, it is right? Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

Ob. *f*

12

f

14

V. *mp*
"In my

Ob. *mp* *p*

14

p *mp*

Leg. *

19

V. *f*
youth," fa-ther Wil-liam re-plied to his son, "I feared it might in-jure the brain; But

Ob. *f*

19

f

21

V. *ff*
now that I'm per - fect - ly sure I have none, Why, I do it a - gain and a - gain. Why, I

Ob. *ff*

Piano *ff*

23

V. do it a - gain and a - gain. Why, I do it a - gain and a - gain. Why, I

Ob.

Piano *ff*
Reo. sim.

25

V. do it a - gain and a - gain."

Ob.

Piano *ff*

Father William

22

27 *mp*

V. "You are

p

29 *mf*

V. old," said the youth, "as I men - tioned be - fore, And have grown most un-com - mon - ly

mp *mf*

Reo. *

31 *f*

V. fat; Yet you turned a back-som - er-sault in at the

Ob. *f*

p *f*

Reo. *

35

V. *door*

Ob.

36

V. *Pray what is the rea - son of*

Ob.

38

V. *that?"*

Ob. *mf*

Father William

24

Ob. *p*

40

p

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

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks, "I

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

43

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

And. *

V. *(mf)*

kept all my limbs ve - ry sup - ple By the

Ob. *(mf)*

46

(mf)

48 *f* *ff*

V. use of this oint - ment - one - shil - ling the box - Al - low me to sell you a couple?"

Ob. *f* *ff*

48 *f* *ff*

Leg. *Leg.* *Leg.* *sim.*

50 *p*

Ob. *p*

50 *mp* *p*

p

54 *mf*

V. "You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak For

Ob.

54 *mf*

Father William

26

56 *dim.*

V. *an-ything tough - er than su-et; — Yet you fin - ished the goose, with the bones and the beak - Pray,*

Ob. *p*

56

58 *p* *f*

V. *how did you man - age to do it?" — "In my*

Ob.

58 *p* *mp*

61

V. *youth," said his fa - ther, "I took to the law, And ar - gued each case with my wife; —*

Ob. *f*

61 *f*

63

V. *ff* And the mus - cu - lar strength, which it gave to my

Ob. *ff*

65

V. jaw, Has las - ted the rest of my

Ob.

65

Leo. Leo. Leo. *

68

V. life." "You are *p*

Ob. *mf* *p*

68

mf

Father William

28

73

V. *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*
old," said the youth, "one would hard-ly sup-pose That your eye was as stea-dy as ev-er ev-er

Ob. *p*

legato
p

76

V. ev - er ev - er; Yet you

Ob.

76

79

V. ba-lanced an eel on the end of your nose-What made you so aw-ful-ly cle-ver?"

Ob.

79

Father William

29

82

Ob.

f

82

pp

f

84

V.

ff

"I have

Ob.

ff

84

ff

86

V.

an-swered three ques-tions, and that is e-nough," Said the fa-ther. "Don't give your-self airs! Do you

Ob.

86

Father William

30

88

V. think I can list-en all day to such stuff? Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs! Be

Ob.

88

90

V. off, or I'll kick you down stairs! Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs! Be

Ob.

90

92

V. off, or I'll kick you down stairs!"

Ob.

92

f *mp* *pp*

ff *f* *mp* *pp*

Leo.

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a piece titled 'Father William'. The score is written for three parts: Voice (V.), Oboe (Ob.), and Piano (Piano). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system starts at measure 88. The vocal part has the lyrics 'think I can list-en all day to such stuff? Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs! Be'. The piano part features a complex accompaniment with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The second system starts at measure 90. The vocal part has the lyrics 'off, or I'll kick you down stairs! Be off, or I'll kick you down stairs! Be'. The piano part continues with similar rhythmic patterns. The third system starts at measure 92. The vocal part has the lyrics 'off, or I'll kick you down stairs!\"'. The piano part includes dynamic markings: *f*, *mp*, *pp* for the Oboe and *ff*, *f*, *mp*, *pp* for the Piano. There are also performance markings like *Leo.* and *sim.* (sustained).