

Like As the Waves Make Towards the Pebbled Shore

Piano Trio

Inspired by William Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 60

Benjamin Hardin

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time, that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.
And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

The piece opens with the piano playing strict quarter notes at 60 bpm, each beat marking a second that has passed. Second-long beats become a motif repeated throughout the piece. The violin and cello enter, growing and receding in volume, symbolizing waves approaching and leaving the shore. In the next section, they repeat a pattern of descending 6ths, slowly increasing in note value. The small violin, symbolizing nativity, sings a melody which is then repeated by the mature cello. The strings then take up the seconds motif, while the piano takes the melody.

In the next section, the violin plays three melodic fragments representing youth, beauty, and nature. Each is interrupted by the cello, a beast which comes to mow down and devour the violin's melodies. As the speaker realizes that his verse has transcended the bonds of time, the music breaks free from its strict time. The violin sings a melody praising the worth of the beloved, accompanied by the piano and later the cello. As it is not bound by time, the melody exists in some form all throughout the music that came before it. Finally, the cello sings the final iteration of the melody, slowing back to the oppressive 60 bpm, as the piano beats the seconds again.

Thank you for listening.