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MTO 28.3 Examples: Aaslid, Sociable Musicopoetics

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

<https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.22.28.3/mto.22.28.3.aaslid.html>

Example 1. Full text of “The Color of My Circumference I,”
as printed in the liner notes for *In What Language*

In the delicate distance
Of brown, I sit on a bus.

With (the) uneasy proximity
Of tan, I look out on Queens

Shade shift my way to JFK
Ride past INS possessing my access

In kind and card, swipe the coded
Stripe and my name drops in ones and zeroes

Somewhere a computer may know
Ladd is to Pratt as Cawthorne is to Willis is

To Pickett and on
What it won’t show are the moments

Of love or lust that swirl
Through centuries and tans me here

Making me one more memento
Of a close-quartered world

All trinkets of time shrink space
A cluttered reflection of collections

Am I a catalogue of memories
A series of possessions?

*Of an age within an age within an age (within an age)
Is a mirror to a mirror to a mirror (to a mirror)
Of a people to a people within a people*

Each image, descending in view like seeing
One's history through the core of a spine

Stepping through the act of self-appropriation

My mother relies on the old
Negro spirit of reinvention

“I am a citizen of the world” (she says)
Ta da she is

Example 2. Transcription of piano [1:06–1:24]—Emergent pulse against ostinato

Example 3. CoMC meter

Example 4. Transcription of pitch stacks and poetry,
numbered by rhythmic cycles, CoMCI excerpt

1 2 3 4 5 6

6 7 8 9 10

11 12 13

14 15 [S] 16

17 18 19 [S]

20 21 22 23 [S]

24 [S] 25 [S1] 26 [S1] 27 [S1]

1 2 3 4 5 6

In the delicate distance
of brown I sit on a bus With the uneasy
proximity of tan I

7 8 9 10

look out on Queens Shade shift my way to JFK
Ride past possessing my access In kind and card Swipe the coded stripe and

11 12 13

my name drops in ones
and zeroes Somewhere a computer may know
Ladd is to Pratt as Cawthorne is
to Willis is to Pickett and on

14 15 [S] 16

What it won't show are the moments of love
or lust that swirl Through centuries and Tans me here Making me one more
memento of a close-quartered world

17 18 19 [S]

All trinkets of time shrink space A cluttered reflection
of collections Am I a catalogue of memories
A series of poseessions? Of an

20 21 22 23 [S]

age within an age within
an age within an age Is a mirror to a mirror to a people to a people within
mirror to a mirror to a mirror Of a descending in view like seeing One's
a people / Each image a people / Each image history through the core of a spine

24 [S] 25 [S1] 26 [S1] 27 [S1]

Stepping through the act of self-appropriation
My mother relies on the old Negro spirit of reinvention
I am a citizen of the world (she says)
Tada she is.

Example 5. Distribution of poetry across rhythmic cycles

1
2
3
4
5 **In** the delicate distance Of brown, I sit on a bus.
6 **With** (the) uneasy proximity Of tan, I look out on
7 Queens Shade shift my
8 way to JFK Ride past INS possessing my access **In** kind and card,
9
10 swipe the coded Stripe and my name drops in ones and zeroes **Somewhere** a computer
11 may know Ladd is to Pratt as Cawthorne is to Willis is **To** Pickett and
12 on
13
14 What it won't show are the moments **Of** love or lust that swirl Through centuries and tans
15 me here **Making** me one more memento Of a close-quartered world
16
17 **All** trinkets of time shrink space
18 A cluttered reflection of collections
19 **Am** I a catalogue of memories A series of possessions? **Of** an age
20 within an age within an age (within an age) Is a mirror
21 to a mirror to a mirror (to a mirror) Of a people
22 to a people within a people **Each** image,
23 descending in view like seeing One's history through the core of a spine
24
25 **Stepping** through the act of self-appropriation **My** mother relies on the old Negro
26 spirit of reinvention "I am a citizen of the world"
27 (she says) Ta da she is

Bold = start of couplet

Underline = start of second line (and third line in the single instance of a three line group)

Highlight = text inside transitional window

Example 6. Transcription of piano and poetry cycles 16–18 [1:30–1:48]—Blurring of figuration

16

17

all trinkets of time shrink space

18

A cluttered reflection of collections

Example 7. S texture, rhythmic cycle 15 [1:24]

15

Example 8. S¹ texture, rhythmic cycle 25 [2.24]

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