



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

The musical score for Example 2 consists of three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system is marked with a box containing '12'. The second system is marked with a box containing '13'. The third system is marked with a box containing '14'. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent changes in meter, indicated by the 11/16 and 15/16 time signatures.

Example 3. CoMC meter

The musical notation for Example 3 shows a single line of music with a CoMC meter. The notation includes a double bar line, a 11/16 time signature, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 15/16 time signature, followed by a double bar line with repeat dots.

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

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 possessions? 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 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

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

Example 6 shows three systems of musical notation, each with a measure number in a box above the first measure. The notation is in 11/16 time and consists of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The first system (measure 16) shows a treble staff with a continuous eighth-note pattern and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The second system (measure 17) includes the lyrics "all trinkets of time shrink space" under the treble staff. The third system (measure 18) includes the lyrics "A cluttered reflection of collections" under the treble staff. The treble staff in all systems features a complex, overlapping eighth-note pattern that blurs the figuration.

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

Example 7 shows a single system of musical notation for measure 15. The notation is in 11/16 time and consists of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The treble staff contains a series of chords, while the bass staff contains a simple accompaniment.

Example 8. S¹ texture, rhythmic cycle 25 [2:24]

Example 8 shows a single system of musical notation for measure 25. The notation is in 11/16 time and consists of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The treble staff contains a series of chords, while the bass staff contains a simple accompaniment.