

THE ONLY EVIDENCE

ERIC SHANFIELD

THE ONLY EVIDENCE

Eric Shanfield | ENS.2024.5 | 9.27.2007-7.28.2024 | 10'

poems by Jesse Ball

Tenor

3 Piccolos

Vibraphone

2 Pianos

String Orchestra

There should be an equal number of desks in each section so the strings may divide equally throughout. The first and second violins are seated opposite one another, and the pianos likewise placed stereophonically toward either side of the stage, with the vibraphone and piccolos near the center. The string complement should be fairly large: approx. 12.12.10.8.6 min., 16.14.12.10.8 max. Where sections (and half sections) divide into groups of three, do so evenly, with any extra players resting rather than doubling.

THE ONLY EVIDENCE

In part a palimpsest, *The Only Evidence*, setting poems by Jesse Ball—among my favorite living writers—began in 2007 with the first song, two small, equal ensembles hocketing chords under a slowly unfolding vocal line, with the occasional exotic trio of piccolos commenting high above a kind of Greek chorus in the sky. That song never quite worked—felt lonesome and attenuated on its own—so eventually accumulated a second a cappella setting of *From a Clearing*, intended as a bridge to a more energetic third song that never quite emerged. Although new versions of the first song were made in 2013 and 2017, it was only in 2024 when I added a string orchestra to the piccolos, vibraphone, and pianos, that the score took shape, and it was then I finally composed *A Speech*, concluding a compositional saga that took seventeen years to shape ten minutes of music.

THE ONLY EVIDENCE

Poems by Jesse Ball from *March Book*

In Part

Sit quiet. Lie still.

Let walls stand, and windows break.

Let fires burn low.

Someone's set chairs in a circle.

Someone's wandering asleep in a cursed house.

And the joy that has its home

in the belly at the base of the soul,

let it come, let it go. Let trees be bowed

by weight, let streams race, and moss decay.

The trembling of furred limbs will not cease—

no one's word, however bold,

will banish this cold. And so, sit for no

portraits, stay for no relinquishings.

There was a moment when I was aware

of beings in the air above my head.

Have they left? Or do they loiter there,

attendant, faithful? Sit quiet,

and let the water be, let the false face

arrange itself or not, as marble basins

fill with rain, fill and empty,

empty of their own accord.

From a Clearing

I was set upon by three men.
I felled the first with a word,
the second with a blow.

Beyond them the pale city
Fortune beckoned.
But the third, oh, the third,
His face was hidden.

And in his hands he held
parchment twisted
like the bones of my throat.

A Speech

The failure of modernity, said the man in the black coat, is the failure of the machine to act morally. It never intended to. But we were deceived by its sober efficiency. We believed it would do both more and less than it ought to have done. Instead it has done less and more, and brought us to many horrible passes. I suppose we would have reached these awful heights ourselves in time. And yet we have come early, and the only books we know are the ones that we ourselves wrote. They will be no help to us, just as we ourselves can be no help to each other. If someone were to forgive me for the things I did in my youth, even that would be an affront. Those crimes are the only evidence that I have lived.

THE ONLY EVIDENCE

I. IN PART

Jesse Ball

Eric Shanfield

♩ = 84 Hypnotic ① 6

Piccolo 1
Piccolo 2
Piccolo 3

Vibraphone
N.B. acc and hold until next marking al fine (except where noted)
p

Piano 1
N.B. acc and hold until next marking al fine (except where noted)
p

Piano 2
N.B. acc and hold until next marking al fine (except where noted)
p

Tenor
p
Sit qui - et. Lie still. Let

Violin I
p

Violin II
p

Viola
p

Violoncello

Contrabass

②

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

walls stand, and win - dows break. Let fi - res burn low. Some - one's set chairs in a cir - cle.

③

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description of the musical score: This page contains the musical score for the eighth page of 'THE ONLY EVIDENCE - I. IN PART'. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes Piccolo 1, 2, and 3 (all with rests), Vibraphone (playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes), Piano 1 (playing chords with a 'mp' dynamic), Piano 2 (playing chords with a 'mp' dynamic), and Tenor (singing the lyrics: 'walls stand, and windows break. Let fires burn low. Some-one's set chairs in a circle.'). The second system includes Violin I and II (playing a melodic line with a 'mp' dynamic), Viola (playing a similar melodic line with a 'mp' dynamic), and Cello (with rests). The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (Bb). Rehearsal marks 2 and 3 are indicated at the beginning of the first and second systems, respectively.

④ ⑤

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

Some - one's_ wand-ering a-sleep in a cursed house.

④ ⑤

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

This musical score page contains the following parts and markings:

- Picc. 1, 2, 3:** Piccolo parts, mostly rests with some notes in measures 4 and 5.
- Vib.:** Vibraphone part with arpeggiated chords and a *mf* dynamic marking.
- Pno. 1, 2:** Piano parts with arpeggiated chords and a *mf* dynamic marking.
- Ten.:** Tenor vocal line with lyrics: "Some - one's_ wand-ering a-sleep in a cursed house." The lyrics are positioned below the staff.
- Vln. I, II:** Violin parts with arpeggiated chords and a *mf* dynamic marking.
- Vla.:** Viola part with arpeggiated chords and a *mf* dynamic marking.
- Vc.:** Violoncello part with arpeggiated chords and a *mf* dynamic marking.
- Cb.:** Contrabass part with arpeggiated chords and a *mf* dynamic marking.

Rehearsal marks ④ and ⑤ are placed above the Piccolo and Violin staves respectively.

This musical score page includes parts for Piccolo 1, 2, and 3; Vibraphone; Piano 1 and 2; Tenor; Violin I and II; Viola; and Cello. The Tenor part features the lyrics: "And the joy that has its home in the belly at the base of the soul, let it come, let it". A circled number 6 indicates a section change. Dynamics such as *mf* and *p* are marked throughout. The score is written in a key with one flat and a 2/4 time signature.

THE ONLY EVIDENCE - I. IN PART

7 8

Picc. 1 *p*

Picc. 2 *p*

Picc. 3 *p*

Vib. *mf* *espress.*

Pno. 1 *mp*

Pno. 2 *mp*

Ten. *mp* *f*
go. Let trees be bowed by weight, let

7 8

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp* *espress.*

Cb. *mf* *pizz.*

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f

mf

p

f sub.

mf sub.

arco

streams race, and moss de - cay. The trem-bling of furred limbs will not cease -

10

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.
mp sub.

Pno. 1
mp sub. *p*

Pno. 2
mp sub. *p*

Ten.
mp mezzo voce
no - one's word, how - ev - er bold, will ba - nish this cold...

Vln. I
mp sub. *p*

Vln. II
mp sub. *p*

Vla.
mp sub. *p*

Vc.
mp sub. *p*

Cb.

10

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.
mf

Pno. 1
mf

Pno. 2
mf

Ten.
mf norm.
And so, sit for no por-traits, stay for no re-lin-quish-ings.
mf

Vln. I
mf

Vln. II
mf

Vla.
mf

Vc.
mf

Cb.

11

12

Picc. 1 *ff* above orchestra

Picc. 2 *ff* above orchestra

Picc. 3 *ff* above orchestra

Vib.

Pno. 1 *f*

Pno. 2 *f*

Ten. *ff* above orchestra
 There was a mo- ment when I was a - ware of be - ings in the air.

12

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*
 on the string *f* 6 3 6 3

Vc. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Cb. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Picc. 1 *p sub.* *fff* *mf* (13)

Picc. 2 *p sub.* *fff* *mf*

Picc. 3 *p sub.* *fff* *mf*

Vib. *

Pno. 1 *mf* *

Pno. 2 *mf* *

Ten. — a - bove_ my head.

Vln. I *mf* (13) *sim.*

Vln. II *f* *fp* *div. a3* *fp*

Vla. *f* *fp* *div. a3* *fp*

Vc. *f* *p* *f* *mf sub.* *div. a3* *sim.*

Cb. *f* *p* *f* *p* *mf*

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

fp

p

3

7/8

14 15

Picc. 1 *p* *mf*

Picc. 2 *p* *mf*

Picc. 3 *p* *mf*

Vib. *f* *mf*

Pno. 1 *f* *mf*

Pno. 2 *f* *mf*

Ten. *f* *fp* *f* *mf*

Have they left? Or do they loiter there, at-tendant, faith-ful?

14 15

Vln. I *f* *fp* *f* *con sord.*

Vln. II *f* *fp* *f* *con sord.*

Vla. *fp* *f* *p* *unis. sul pont.*

Vc. *f* *p* *f* *p*

Cb. *f* *p* *f* *p*

16

Picc. 1 *mp*

Picc. 2 *mp*

Picc. 3 *mp*

Vib.

Pno. 1 *mp*

Pno. 2 *mp*

Ten. *mp* *mf* *mp*
Sit qui - et, and let the wa - ter be, let the false face ar - range it - self or not, as

con sord.
0

Vln. I *p* *mp* *mf*

Vln. II *mp* *mf*
unis. con sord.

Vla. *mp* *mf*
con sord.

Vc. *mp* *mf*
con sord.

Cb.

musical score for 'THE ONLY EVIDENCE - I. IN PART'. The score includes parts for Picc. 1, 2, 3, Vib., Pno. 1, 2, Ten., Vln. I, II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. The Tenor part includes the lyrics: "mar - ble ba - sins fill with rain, fill and emp - ty, fill and emp - ty,". The score features various dynamics such as *mp*, *mf*, and *p*, and includes performance instructions like *scad.*, *mf*, *mp*, *p*, *pizz.*, and *(touch - 5 harm.)*. The music is in 4/4 time and B-flat major.

17

Picc. 1 *p*

Picc. 2 *p*

Picc. 3 *p*

Vib. *p*

Pno. 1 *p*

Pno. 2 *p*

Ten. *p*
emp - ty of their own ac - cord.

17

Vln. I *p* senza sord. pizz.

Vln. II *p* senza sord. pizz.

Vla. *mf* on the string *p* senza sord. pizz.

Vc. *p* senza sord. arco *p* *p* *decresc.*

Cb. *p* senza sord. arco *p* *p* *decresc.*

18

Picc. 1 *p* *pp*

Picc. 2 *p* *pp*

Picc. 3 *p* *pp*

Vib.

Pno. 1 *pp*

Pno. 2 *pp*

Ten.

18

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Cb. *pp*

div. a4 (arco)

non div. pizz.

div. pizz.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score contains parts for Piccolo 1, 2, and 3, Vibraphone, Piano 1 and 2, Tenor, Violin I and II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. It begins at measure 18. The woodwinds play melodic lines with dynamics ranging from piano (p) to pianissimo (pp). The strings play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The cello and contrabass parts include performance instructions: 'div. a4 (arco)' for the cello and 'div. pizz.' for the contrabass, both starting at measure 18. The piano parts provide harmonic support with chords and arpeggios.

THE ONLY EVIDENCE

II. FROM A CLEARING

Jesse Ball

Eric Shanfield

$\text{♩} = 108$

f

Tenor

I was set u - pon by three men. I

Violoncello Solo

f

①

Ten.

p sub. *p*

fell the first with a word, the se - cond with a blow. Be -

Vc.

p

②

Ten.

f *p sub.* *f* *p* G.P.

yond them the pale ci - ty For - tune be - ckoned.

Vc.

f *p sub.* *f* *p*

③

Ten.

mf *p sotto voce*

But the third, oh, the third.

Vc.

p *mf* *p* sul pont.

④

Ten.

f *p*

His face was hid - den. And in his hands he held

Vc.

norm. *f* *p*

⑤

Ten.

f *ff*

parch - ment twist - ed like the bones of my throat.

Vc.

f

II III II III IV

attaca

THE ONLY EVIDENCE

III. A SPEECH

Jesse Ball

Eric Shanfield

♩ = 108 Mechanical

①

Piccolo 1 *f*

Piccolo 2 *f*

Piccolo 3 *f*

Vibraphone *f* motor on, fast *damp*

Piano 1 *f*

Piano 2 *f*

Tenor *ff* (throat.) *f* The fail-ure of mo-dern-i-ty, *f* said the

♩ = 108 Mechanical

①

Violin I *f* *sim.*

Violin II *f* *sim.*

Viola *f* *sim.* *fp* *f*

Violoncello *f* *sim.* *fp* *f*

Contrabass *f* *sim.* *fp* *f*

②

Picc. 1 *f*

Picc. 2 *f*

Picc. 3 *f*

Vib. *f* *damp* *f*

Pno. 1 *f*

Pno. 2 *f*

Ten. *f*
 man in the black_ coat, _____ is the fail- ure of the ma- chine to act

③

Vln. I *f* *f*

Vln. II *f* *f*

Vla. *f* *fp* *f* *f*

Vc. *f* *fp* *f* *f*

Cb. *f* *fp* *f* *f*

The image shows a page of a musical score for a symphony orchestra and a tenor. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It is divided into two systems, each starting with a circled number 2 and 3. The instruments listed are Piccolo 1, 2, and 3; Vibraphone; Piano 1 and 2; Tenor; Violin I and II; Viola; Violoncello; and Contrabass. Dynamics include fortissimo (f), piano fortissimo (fp), and damp. The tenor part has lyrics: "man in the black_ coat, _____ is the fail- ure of the ma- chine to act".

This musical score is for the third movement, "A SPEECH," of the piece "THE ONLY EVIDENCE." It is page 26 of the score. The music is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The score includes parts for Piccolo 1, 2, and 3, Vibraphone, Piano 1 and 2, Tenor, Violin I and II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The Piccolo parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Vibraphone part features a sustained chord with a *damp* instruction. The Piano parts provide harmonic support, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a bass line. The Tenor part has the lyrics "mor - al - ly." The string parts (Violins, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with dynamics ranging from forte (*f*) to piano (*p*). A circled number 4 is placed above the first measure of the Piccolo 1 part, indicating a fourth ending.

⑤ ⑥

Picc. 1 *p*

Picc. 2 *p*

Picc. 3 *p*

Vib. *p*

Pno. 1 *p* *p*

Pno. 2 *p*

Ten. *p*
It ne - ver in - tend - ed to.

Vln. I *p* *p*

Vln. II *p* *p*

Vla. *p* *p*
div. a3 (arco) unis. (arco)
div. a3 pizz. unis. arco

Vc. *p* *p* *p* *p*
div. a3 (arco) unis. (arco)
div. a3 pizz. unis. arco

Cb. *p* *p*

This musical score page, numbered 28, is titled "THE ONLY EVIDENCE - III. A SPEECH". It features a variety of instruments including Piccolo (Picc.), Vibraphone (Vib.), Piano (Pno.), Tenor (Ten.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score is divided into two systems, with measures 7 and 8 circled at the top of each system. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The Piccolo parts are mostly rests. The Vibraphone part features a melodic line starting in measure 7. The Piano parts include a left hand with a *p cresc.* dynamic and a right hand with a *cresc.* dynamic, both leading to a *f* dynamic in measure 8. The Tenor part is a whole rest. The Violin I and II parts have long notes in measure 7 and more active lines in measure 8, with dynamics ranging from *p* to *f*. The Viola and Cello parts have long notes in measure 7 and more active lines in measure 8, with dynamics ranging from *f* to *f*.

9

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

p

f

f

p

f

But we were de - ceived by its

9

10

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

so - ber ef - fi - cien - cy. We be - lieved it would do both

f

p

f

p

f

ad.

10

Sva if no extension

11

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

more and less than it ought to have done.

12

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

In - stead it has done less and more, and brought us to ma - ny hor - ri - ble pass - es.

12

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

13

Picc. 1 *mp* slightly under voice

Picc. 2 *mp* slightly under voice

Picc. 3 *mp* slightly under voice

Vib. *mf*

Pno. 1 *mf*

Pno. 2 *mf*

Ten. *mf*
I sup - pose we would have reached these aw - ful heights our - selves in time.

13

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

14

Picc. 1 *mf*

Picc. 2 *mf*

Picc. 3 *mf*

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

14

Vln. I

Vln. II *p cresc.*

Vla. *p cresc.*

Vc. *p*

Cb. *p*

p sub.

sim.

15 16

Picc. 1 *mf*

Picc. 2 *mf*

Picc. 3 *mf*

Vib. *mf*

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten. *mf*

And yet we have come ear-ly, and the on-ly books we know are the

15 16

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Cb.

17 18

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

ones that we_ our - selves_ wrote. They will be no help to us,

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

(arco)
mf

pizz.
mf

Detailed description of the musical score: This page contains the musical score for measures 17 and 18 of 'THE ONLY EVIDENCE - III. A SPEECH'. The score is written for a large ensemble including three Piccolos (Picc. 1, 2, 3), Vibraphone (Vib.), two Pianos (Pno. 1, 2), Tenor (Ten.), Violins I and II (Vln. I, II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measures 17 and 18 are marked with circled numbers. The Piccolos play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Vibraphone plays a melodic line with a sustained note. The Pianos provide harmonic support with chords and arpeggios. The Tenor sings the lyrics: 'ones that we_ our - selves_ wrote. They will be no help to us,'. The strings play a rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'mp under voice' and 'mf', and performance instructions like 'port.' and '(arco)'. The Contrabass part includes 'pizz.' and 'mf' markings.

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

just as we our - selves can be no help to each other - er.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

20

21

Picc. 1

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

If some-one were to for - give me for the things I did in my

20

21

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Musical score for Picc. 1, Picc. 2, Picc. 3, Vib., Pno. 1, Pno. 2, Ten., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. (pizz./arco). Includes measures 22 and 23, and lyrics: youth, ev - en that would be an af - front. Those

Picc. 1 (24) (25)

Picc. 2

Picc. 3

Vib. *damp*

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Ten.

crimes are the on - ly e - vi - dence that I have lived.

Vln. I (24) (25)

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

non div.

come sopra

slightly off the string

non div.

non div.

26

Picc. 1 *ff*

Picc. 2 *ff*

Picc. 3 *ff*

Vib. *ff*

Pno. 1 *ff*

Pno. 2 *ff*

Ten.

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. II *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Cb. *ff*

poco rit.

27

Picc. 1 *ff* *p sub.* *fff*

Picc. 2 *ff* *p sub.* *fff*

Picc. 3 *ff* *p sub.* *fff*

Vib. *damp* *p* *fff*

Pno. 1 *fff*

Pno. 2 *fff*

Ten. *fff*

A SPEECH

27

Vln. I *non vib. al fine* *p sub.* *fff*

Vln. II *non vib. al fine* *p sub.* *fff*

Vla. *non vib. al fine* *p sub.* *fff*

Vc. *non div.* *fff*

Cb. *fff*

poco rit.