

David Feurzeig

Three Mnemonics

for female chorus

Months	2' 00
Music	4' 00
Monarchs	1' 30

texts traditional, adapted by the composer

total duration ca. 7' 30

In “Months” the utilitarian doggerel of a familiar calendar rhyme serves as the basis for a haunting bipolar expressionist fantasy, achieved through a sort of musical surrealism.

“Music” (subtitled “First Lessons”) begins as a simple primer on the note names of the treble staff, gradually unraveling as it devolves into a tirade against the insidious sexist “lessons” embedded in language and culture—even in a seemingly innocuous pedagogical mnemonic. Though the text strays from the lesson plan, the lyrics maintain the alphabetic scheme of the mnemonic throughout: the first letter of each word matches the pitch being sung, as in “Every Good Boy Does Fine” .

“Monarchs” is a cheekily deranged setting of a schoolroom verse that rattles off in order the occupants of the English throne, with a brief interlude for a couplet memorializing the fates of Henry VIII’s wives. No offense is meant to HRH Queen Elizabeth II, long may she reign.

Months

Thirty days hath November,
April, June, and September.
Of twenty-eight there is but one,
All the remnant thirty-one.

Music

F-A-C-E: “face.”
Every Good Boy Does Fine...

Monarchs

The Monarchs of England:
Willie, Willie, Harry, Stee,
Harry, Dick, John, Harry Three;
One, two, three Neds, Richard Two,
Harrys Four, Five, Six...then who?
Edwards Four, Five, Dick the Bad,
Harrys twain, Ned Six (the Lad),
Mary, Bessie, James the Vain,
Charlie, Charlie, James again,
Will and Mary, Anna Gloria,
Georges four, Will Four, Victoria,
Edward Seven, George and Ted,
George the Sixth, Liz till she's...

The Six Wives of Henry VIII:

Divorced, beheaded, died,
Divorced, beheaded, survived.

Three Mnemonics

David Feurzeig
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I. Months

for Dawn Willis and Bella Voce

Flexibly, with exaggerated expression ♩ ca. 63

Soprano*

Alto 1*

Alto 2

(altos quasi legato — "portamento")

S

A1

A2

S

A1

A2

* in 3-part passages, adjust divisi as needed for balance

16

S: poco riten.

A1: No-vem-ber No-vem - ber No-vem-ber No-vem-ber A - pril,

A2: No-vem-ber No-vem - ber No-vem-ber No-vem-ber A - pril,

molto ***ff***

No - No-vem - ber No vember No-vem-ber No-vem-ber A - - pril,

molto ***ff***

Bright and articulated

22

S1: G.P. ***mp cresc.*** Ju - Ju - June June ***div.*** ***fff non dim.!***

S2: G.P. ***mp cresc.*** June June ***div.*** ***f***

A1: G.P. ***f cresc.*** June June Ju - Ju - Ju - Ju -

A2: G.P. ***mf cresc.*** Ju - Ju - June June ***f*** ***div.***

June June Ju - Ju - June

Poco meno mosso

27

S: ***unis. pp*** Sep-tem-ber, Sep-tem-ber, Sep-tem-ber, Sep-tem - ber, ***rit.*** ***più pp*** ***div.***

A1: ***pp*** Sep-tem-ber, Sep-tem-ber, Sep-tem-ber, Sep-tem - ber, ***più pp***

A2: ***pp*** Sep - tem-ber, Sep - tem-ber, Sep - tem - ber,

4 35 **Tempo I** ca. 63 *pp misterioso* *accel.* *cresc.*

S1 Of twen - ty - eight there is, of twen - ty - eight there is but one! _____
misterioso pp cresc.

S2 Of twen - ty - eight there is but one, there is but one! _____
misterioso p cresc.

A1 Of twen - ty - eight there is, there is but one! _____
misterioso mp cresc.

A2 Of twen - ty - eight there is but but _____

A tempo poco meno, $\text{♩} = 66$
 optionally solo

43 *p possible* *p cresc.*

S1 All the rest, all the rem - nant
p cresc.

S2 all the rest, all the
p cresc.

A1 (the) rem - nant thir - ty -
p cresc.

A2 *ff* *a piacere* optionally solo
p cresc. *p cresc.*
 one! _____ All the rem - nant thir - ty -

rall.

51 *(,) mf* *pp*

S1 thir - ty -, thir - ty - one. _____ (n)

S2 rem - nant thir - ty -, thir - ty - one. _____ (n)

A1 one, *(,)* *pp* - ty

A2 one. _____ thir -

II. Music
or
First Lessons

Semplice ♩ = 72

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto 1

Alto 2

Pitch Pipes

E face... E flat E flat E

C face... legato

A face... A sharp A sharp

F face...

G. P.

pp

p

8

S1

S2

A1

A2

PP

flat sharp E sharp flat E sharp flat E sharp flat E

C flat C C flat sharp C flat

A sharp flat A A flat sharp A flat sharp A

F sharp F F sharp flat F

(catch breath as needed)

p legato

p

14

S1 — sharp flat E flat sharp E sharp flat E sharp

S2 sharp C flat sharp C sharp flat C sharp

A1 flat sharp A sharp flat sharp

A2 F flat sharp F flat sharp

PP (p) (p)

21

S1 flat E flat E — G. P.

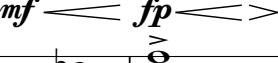
S2 C —

A1 A sharp A —

A2 F —

PP — — —

Poco più vivo, ca 88

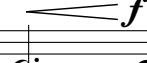
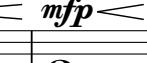
28 *with wonder* *p*  *f* G. P. *mf*  *fp*  G. P.

S1 - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

S2 - *p*   *f* - - - - - - - - -

B D (f) - - - - - - - - - -

Boy Does Fine

A1 *p with wonder*  *f* - *mp*  *mfp*  G. P.

G (f) - - - - - - - - -

Ev 'ry Good

A2 *p with wonder*  *f* - *mp*  *mfp*  G. P.

E (f) - - - - - - - - -

Ev 'ry

Allegro = 144

34 *mf*

S Do Fine, Do Good, Do Fine, Does Fine, Fine Boys Do Good, Fine

A Boys Boys Good Boys Ev 'ry Boy Ev 'ry Boy Does!

40 *mf*

S Boys All Boys Do Fine, Fine Boys All Boys Do Fine, Do Fine,

A Good Boys Boys Do Fine, Ev 'ry Boy Good Boys Good Boys All Boys Do Fine, Ev 'ry

più f

46 *più f*

S Fine, Do Fine, Fine, Does Fine,

A Do-Good Boy's Good Boys Ev 'ry Do-Good Boy's Ev 'ry Dog-Gone Boy Ev 'ry

8 50

S: Fine Boys Do Fine, Dog-Gone Boy, F-ing Boy, All Boys, Boys Boys
A: Boy Dog-Gone Boys Ev'-ry Boy Dog-Gone Boy All Boys, Boys Boys

f cresc.

S: Boys Boys Boys Boys Boys Boys Boys! God Dam- mit!* F
A: Boys Boys Boys Boys Boys Boys Boys! Boys Do Good, God Dam- mit!* F

f subito ff

p nasal, sarcastic f subito ff

Risoluto ♩ = 126

S: — that! Girls! Girls! Fine Girls Do Fine, Fine Girls
A: — that! Girls! Girls! Good Girls

ff

mf

67

S: Do Fine, Girls Do Fine, Does Fine, Do Fine! Does Fine,
A: Girls! Ev' ry Girl Bet-ter Do Ev' ry Girl

mf

S: Are Fine, Do Fine! Are Fine, Do Fine!
A: Girls Girls Bet-ter Do Girls Girls Bet-ter Do Ev' ry

div.

*Depending on singer and audience sensibilities, may be changed to "G. D. it," "Gol-Dangit," or the like.

76

S1 Girls Are Fine! Girls Are Fine! Does Bet-ter!

S2 Does Fine! Does Fine! Does Bet-ter Does Bet-ter!

A1 Girl Bet-ter Do (Fine) Bet-ter Do (Fine) Does Bet-ter Does Bet-ter!

A2 Girl Ev'-ry Girl Ev'-ry Girl Does Bet-ter Does Bet-ter!

9

80 *mf*

S Girls Do Bet-ter, Girl Does Bet-ter, Girls Do Bet-ter, Girl Does Bet-ter, Does Fine! E-ven Bett-ter,

A Ev' ry Girl Ev' ry Girl Ev' ry Girl Girls Do

85

S Ev' -ry-thing Bett-ter, Far Bett-ter, Girls Do Fine!

A Girls Do Ev' - ry Girl! Ev' - ry

88 *f cresc.*

S Ev' ry Girl Bet ter Do *ff* (unis.) *broadening* *fff* *fff*

A Girl Bet -ter_ *ff* (unis.) *broadening* *fff*

94 G. P. **Tempo I**

S1 - - - - - | : & p neutral,demure | pp
E _____ face...
S2 - - - - - | : & p neutral,demure | pp
C _____ face...
A1 - - - - - | : & p neutral,demure | pp
A _____ face...
A2 - - - - - | : & p neutral,demure | pp
F _____ face...
PP - - - - - | : & pp
Tempo I

Detailed description: The musical score is for five voices (S1, S2, A1, A2) and piano (PP). The key signature is one sharp (G major). The time signature is common time. Measure 1 starts with a rest. Measures 2 through 5 are labeled 'Tempo I'. In each measure, a different voice enters with a sustained note and grace notes. The dynamics are 'p neutral,demure' for the sustained notes and 'pp' for the grace notes. The vocal parts sing 'E', 'C', 'A', and 'F' respectively. Measures 6 and 7 start with a forte dynamic 'pp'.

III. Monarchs

I Strongly rhythmic and slightly deranged ♩ = 108

Soprano* *p deciso* *mp*
 Wil - lie, Wil - lie,
 Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie,

Alto 1* *p deciso*
 Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie,

Alto 2 *p deciso*
 Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie,

6 (div.) (unis.)
 S Har - ry, Stee, Har - ry, Dick, John, Har - ry Three, one two three Neds, Rich - ard Two,
 A1 Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee,
 A2 Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee, Wil - lie, Harry, Stee,

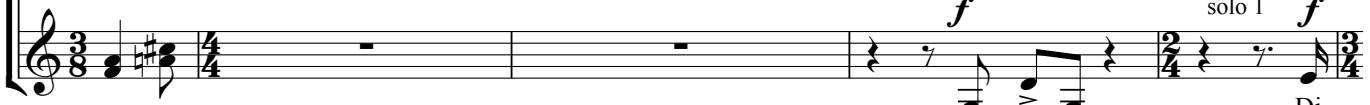
II poco riten. *A Tempo*
 S Harrys Four, Five, Six... then who? Ed-wards Four, Five, Dick the Bad, Harrys Sev'n, Eight,
 A1 Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Harry, who? Ed-wards Four, Five, Dick the Bad, Harrys Sev'n, Eight,
 A2 Wil - lie, Harry, who? Ed-wards Four, Five, Dick the Bad, Harrys Sev'n, Eight,

* in 3-part passages, adjust divisi as needed for balance

12

solo (interrupting) *f* 3 Slightly slower and less strict brightly tutti *f* Maestoso ♩ ca. 92 solo 1 *f*

S 

Ned the... Hen-ry the Eighth? I know one a-bout his wives! Let's hear it! Di-
A 

Ned the... Let's hear it! Di-

21

accel...

solo 2 *mp* solo 3 *p* solo 1 *f* solo 2 *mp* tutti *f* < *ff*
 vorced, Be-head-ed, Died, Di - vorced, Be - head-ed, Sur - vived!

A 

vorced, Be-head-ed, Died, Di - vorced, Be - head-ed, Sur - vived! —

28

Tempo I, again strictly rhythmic

mf

S 

Ed - wards Four, Five, Dick the Bad., Har -rys twain, Ned

A1 

Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie,

A2 

Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie,

33

poco riten.

S 

Six (the Lad), Ma - ry, Bes - sie, James the Vain, Char - lie, Char - lie, James a - gain,

A1 

Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Har - ry, gain,

A2 

Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee, Wil - lie, Har - ry, gain,

A Tempo ma poco meno mosso ♩ ca. 100

38 *mf*

S Will and Mar - y, An - na Glo - ria, Geor - ges four, Will Four, Vic - to - ria,
A Will and Mar - y, An - na Glo - ria, Geor - ges four, Will Four, Vic - to - ria,

42 *poco a poco più animato e cresc.* *f* *riten.* G.P.

S Ed - ward Sev - en, George and Ted, George the Sixth, Liz till she's... *
A Ed - ward Sev - en, George and Ted, George the Sixth, Liz till she's... *

47 **Tempo I**

S1 Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee
S2 Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee
A1 Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Har - ry,
A2 Wil - lie, Har - ry,

50 *fp* *sfp*
S Wil - lie, Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee...
A Wil - lie, Har - ry, Stee...

* If this offends, "now Liz in-...." or "E-liz-a..." may be substituted for the last three syllables.