## Twelve Slow Rounds

Paul Burnell

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Composed 2012

Twelve 4-part rounds for voices and/or instruments using English translations by Herbert A. Giles of Chinese poems.

The rounds may be performed by voices, or by instruments alone, or a combination of both, and may be doubled an octave lower.

All performers read from the same music and are divided into four even groups - A, B, C D. The standard method of round performing can be observed. For example, group A begins line 1 then proceeds to lines 2, 3 etc. Group B begins line 1 as group A begins line 2 and continues in the same way. In this way all the groups sing the same melody but with all the groups beginning at different times. The groups may continue repeating the melody a pre-determined number of times.

Some rounds have optional pauses in the last bar of each line. These pauses do not have to be observed. If the pauses are observed the groups should end the movement together. Where movements do not have written pauses, this means that the groups should end one after the other.

Other performance options, such as drones, are given at the bottom of each page. Performers may use any style of singing or playing and are free to consider other accompanying textures that seem appropriate.

The texts for the rounds are taken from 'Chinese Poetry in English Verse' (1898) by Herbert Allen Giles. The translations are of classical Chinese poems, and those set here are credited by Giles as follows:

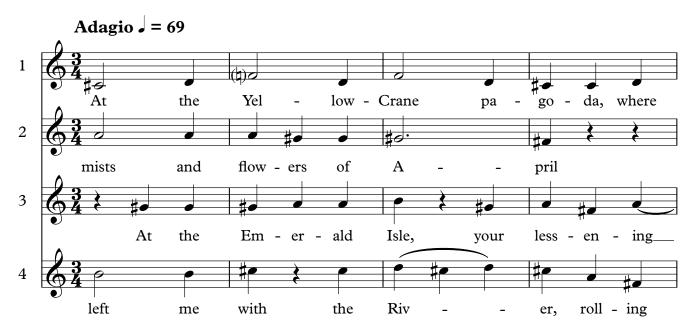
- 1. Li Po [Chinese: 李白; pinyin: Lǐ Bái, Lǐ Bó; (701-762)]
- 2. Mei Shêng
- 3. Tu Fu [Chinese: 杜甫; pinyin: Dù Fǔ; (712-770)]
- 4. Tu Ch'in-niang [Chinese: 杜秋娘; pinyin: Du Qiu Niang; (c.750-850)]
- 5. Tu Mu [Chinese: 杜牧; pinyin: Dù Mù; (803-852)]
- 6. Tu Mu
- 7. Hsieh Jung [Xie Lingyun?]
- 8. Wang An-shih [Chinese: 王安石; pinyin: Wáng Ānshí; (1021-1086)]
- 9. Anon.
- 10. Li Po
- 11. Yang I [Yang Yi (974-1030)]
- 12. Li Po

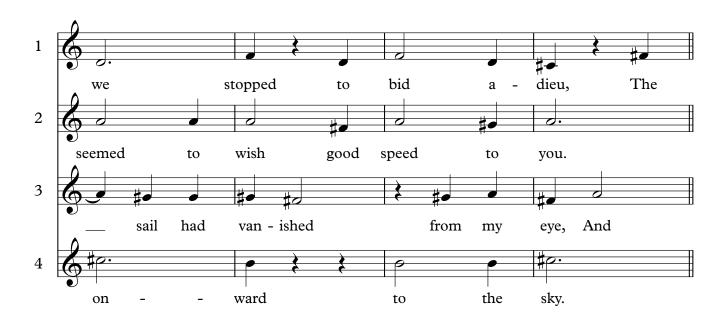
[Information in square brackets added by the composer]

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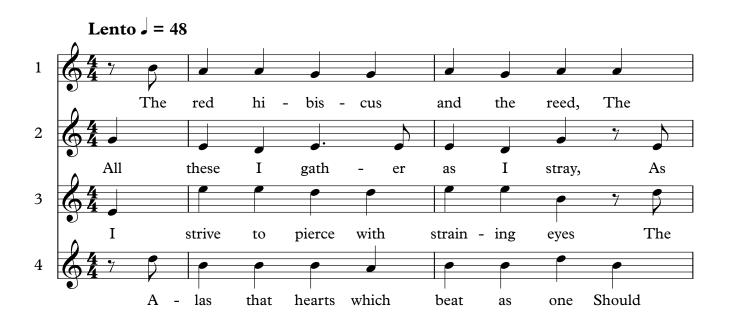
Herbert A. Giles (1845-1935)

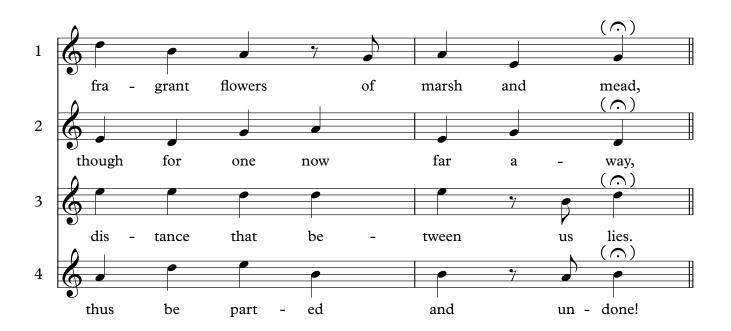
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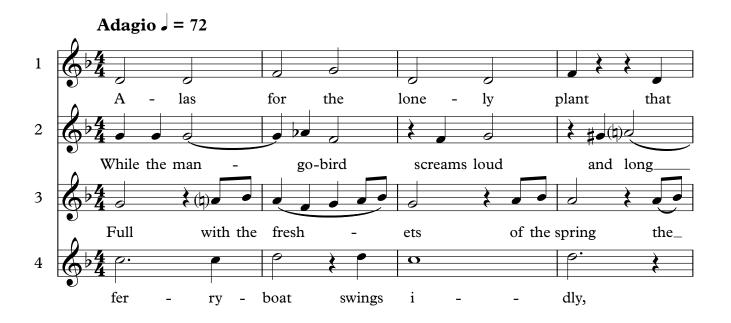


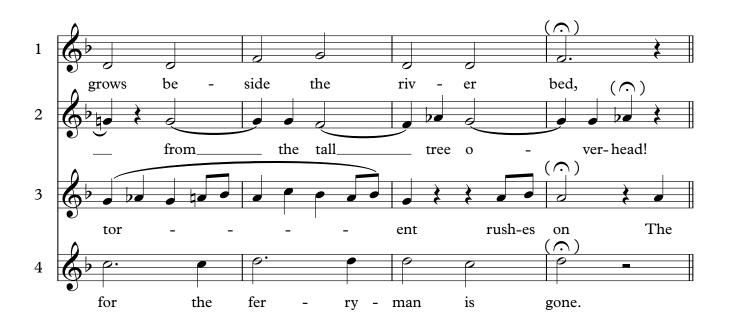
Optional: Drone on high C sharp, introduced quietly halfway through and finishing at the end of the round.





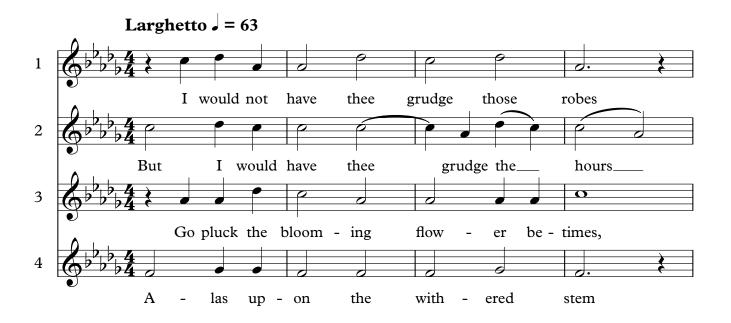
Optional: plastics bags quietly and constantly rustled throughout to produce the effect of a gentle breeze through tall grass.

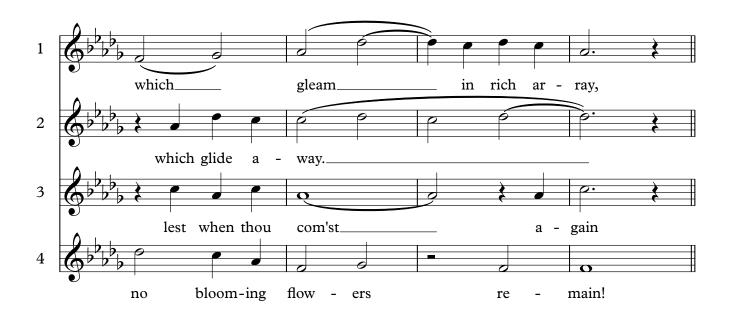




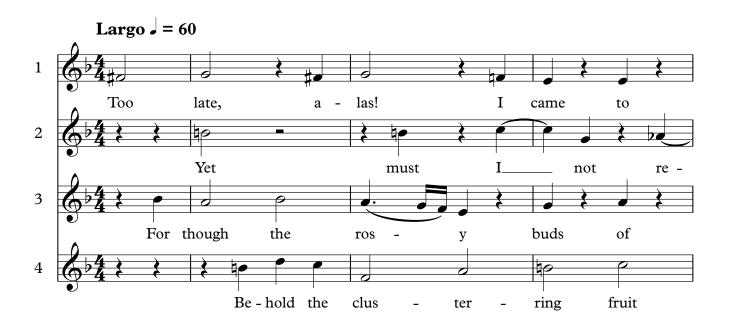
Optional: Semibreves/whole notes struck on the first beat of every bar on orchestral bass drum throughout.

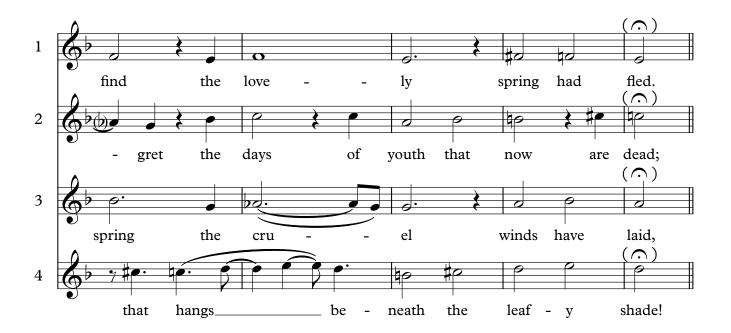
Also optional: low D crotchets/quarter notes on beats 2 and 4, starting halfway through the round and continuing to the end.



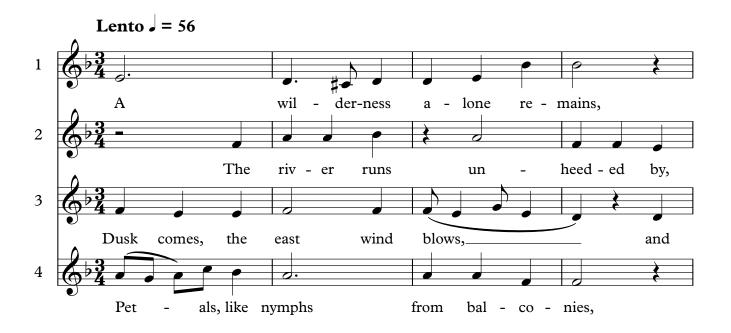


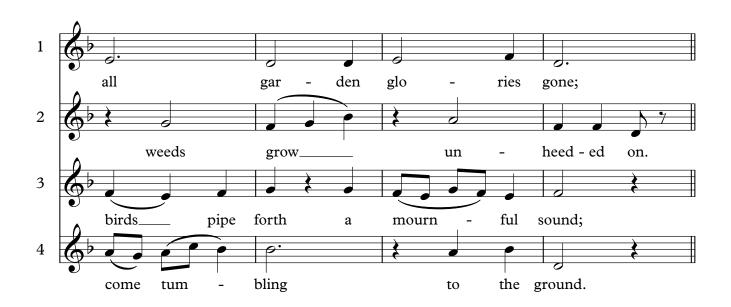
Optional: repeating crotchets/quarter notes on Ab above middle C played from the beginning but fading out before the round has finished. Ideally played on vibraphone or piano string struck with a soft mallet.



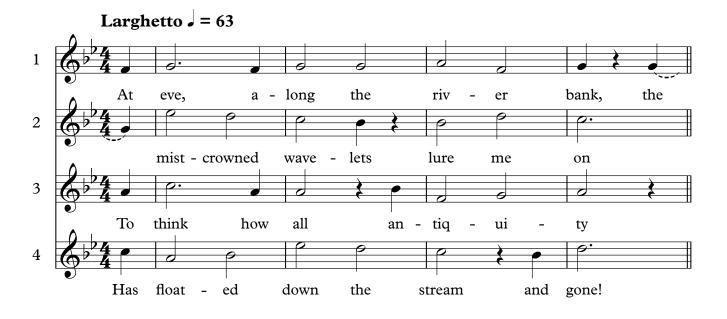


Optional: Low G drone throughout.

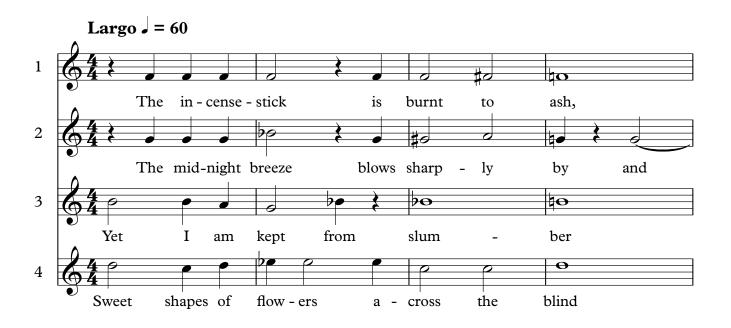


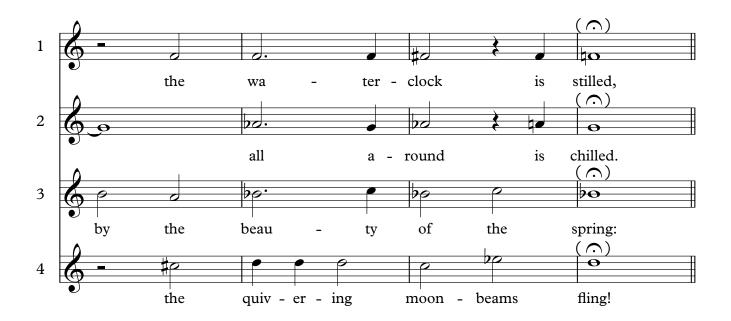


Optional: towards end voices stop singing the text and insteading sing the notes quietly to 'oo'. Also optional: Repeating 4-bar bass figure during the middle part of the round - dotted minims/half notes in this order: C, Bb, C, D.

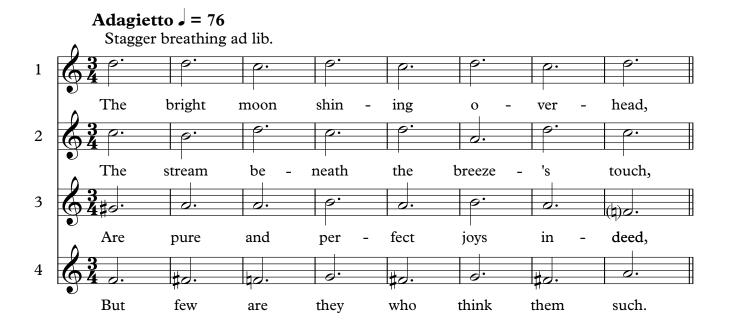


Optional: Quiet, legato quavers/eighth notes alternating A-Bb (above middle C), starting before the round and continuing throughout.



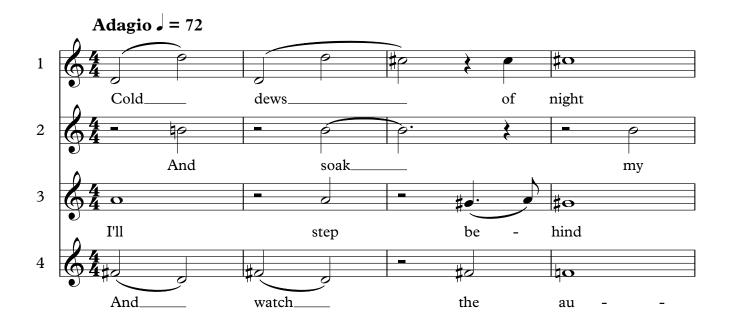


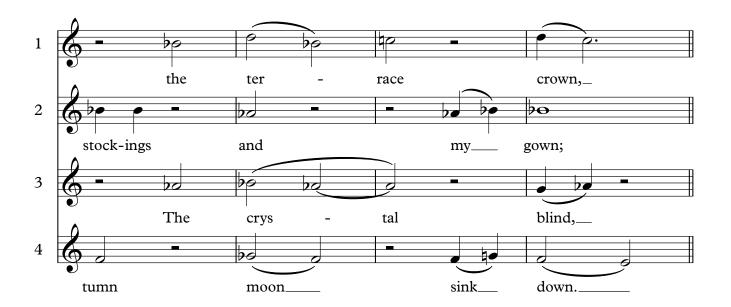
Optional: Drone on G, ideally tremolo on vibraphone or marimba, introduced half-way through the round.



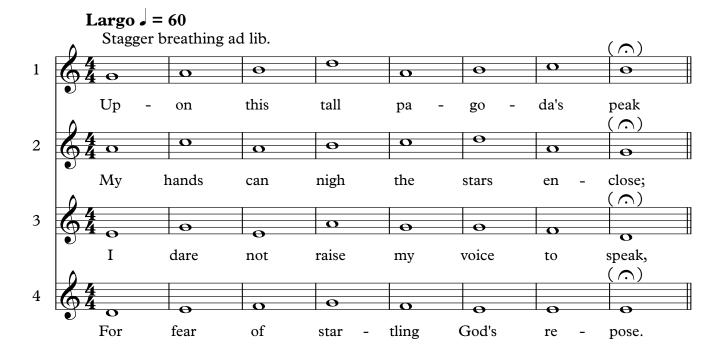
Optional: Drone on D throughout.

Also optional: an additional drone on D an octave lower, 8 beats long with a crotchet/quarter note rest, repeating every 3 bars.

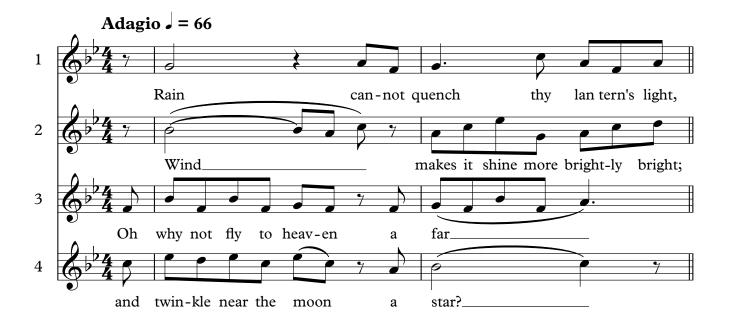




Optional: quiet roll on suspended cymbal or tam-tam throughout.



Optional: a multitude of thumb pianos (kalimbas/mbiras, or similar) with random pitches played very delicately throughout.



Optional: Repeated F quavers/eighth notes as an introduction and then throughout. Ideally including vibraphone, guitar, piano etc.