

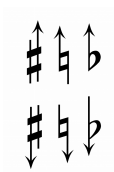
Harry Partch: Poems by Li Po

(Transcription: Iván González Escuder)

Harry Partch: Poems by Li Po

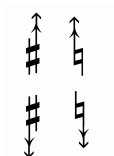
Microtonality:

- The accidentals in front of the notes indicate the specific pitch (each note has its accidental).
- Only the notes that are repeated have no accidental.
- The microtonal deviations of Partch music are notated with approximation; every tone is divided in 12 steps:




1/12 Tone (just intonation of the natural third; deviation: ca. 17 cents)

The diagram shows two rows of three notes each. The top row notes are marked with upward-pointing arrows, and the bottom row notes are marked with downward-pointing arrows. The notes in each row are: a sharp sign (#), a natural sign (♮), and a flat sign (♭).



1/6 Tone (just intonation of the natural seventh; deviation: ca. 33 cents)

The diagram shows two rows of three notes each. The top row notes are marked with upward-pointing arrows, and the bottom row notes are marked with downward-pointing arrows. The notes in each row are: a sharp sign (#), a natural sign (♮), and a flat sign (♭).



1/4 Tone (just intonation of the 11th harmonic; deviation: 50 cents)

The diagram shows a single row of seven notes. From left to right, the notes are marked with: a flat sign (♭), a natural sign (♮), a sharp sign (#), a natural sign (♮), a sharp sign (#), a sharp sign (#), and a double sharp sign (𝄌).

Eleven Poems by Li Po

Set to Music by Harry Partch

Texts from the Works of Li Po, the Chinese Poet,
Done into English Verse by Shigayoshi Obata
E.P. Dutton & Co., 1922

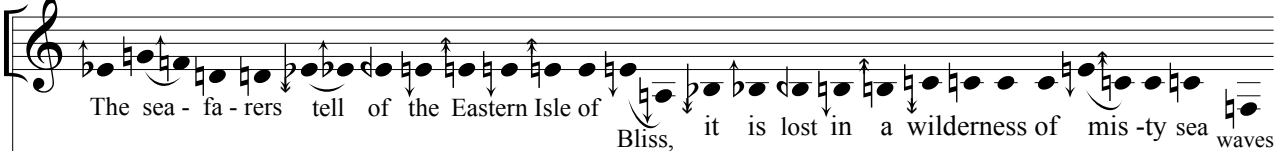
H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

A Dream

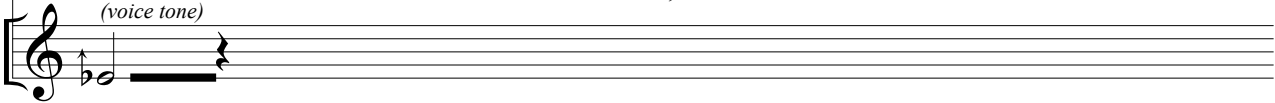
(Original title: His Dream of the Skyland - A Farewell Poem)

Voice



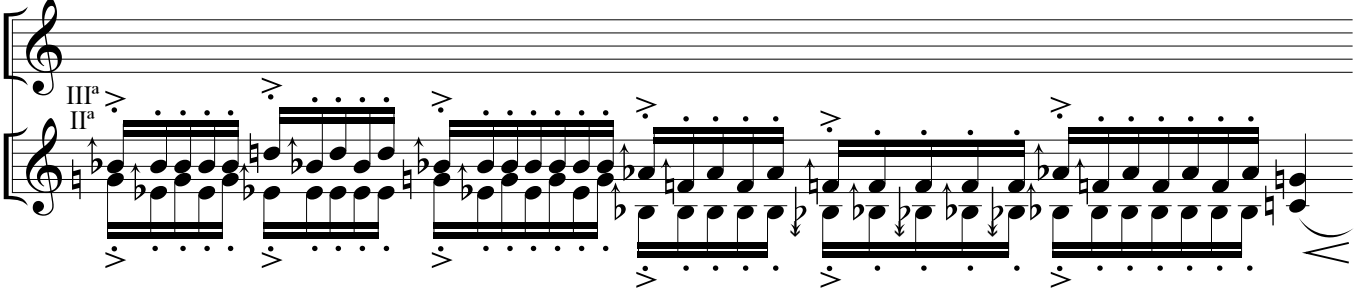
The sea - fa - rers tell of the Eastern Isle of Bliss, it is lost in a wilderness of mis - ty sea waves

Adapted viola




(voice tone)

Viola

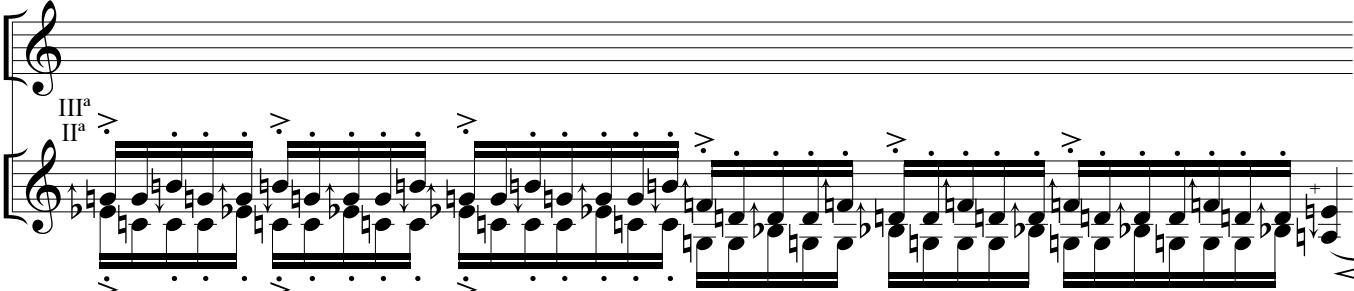


Viola



But the Sky - land of the South the Yueh - landers say, Maybe seen through cracks of the glimmering cloud

Viola



This land of the sky stretches a - cross the leagues of hea- ven;

Viola

It ri - ses above the Five Mountains and towers over the Scarlet Castle,

Viola

While, as if sta-gge-ring before it, the Tien-Tai Peak of forty-eight thousand feet leans toward the south east

Viola

molto accel.

ff

Viola

So, longing to dream of the southlands of Wu and Yueh,

p

8/7+ 6/5- 8/7+ 12/11+

Viola

I flew across the Mi - rror Lake one night under the moon

Viola

The moon in the Lake fo - llowed my flight

Viola

beginn trem. pp

$\frac{64}{33}$
7/6-

$\frac{33}{32}$
5/4-

$\frac{21}{20}$
5/4+

Fo - llowed me to the town of Yen - chi

Viola

$\frac{64}{33}$
7/6-

$\frac{64}{33}$
7/6-

$\frac{28}{15}$
10/9

$\frac{64}{33}$
7/6-

Here still stands the man - sion of Prince Hsie

Viola

$\frac{55}{28}$
11/8-

$\frac{55}{28}$
11/8-

glide

I saw the green wa - ters curl and heard the monkeys' shrill cries

Viola

glide

f

gl.

f

I climbed, putting on the clogs of the prince, Skyward on a ladder of clouds,

Viola

11/9+ 18/11 15/11- 9/5 11/7+ 21/20 8/5+ 15/14 5/3+ 9/8- 12/7+ 8/7+ < f >

And half way up from the sky-wall I saw the morning sun,

Viola

< ff > 12/7 22/15+ 9/5 14/9- 40/21 18/11- 9/8+ 64/33 11/9+ 21/20 9/7+ 10/9 ff

And heard the hea-ven's cock crowing in the mid-air

Viola

glide glide with thumb < ff

Now a-mong a thousand pre-ci-pi-ces my way wound round and round;

Viola

IV^a III^a 5/4- 15/8- 9/7- 27/14- 21/16- 55/28 11/8- 33/32- 21/16- 55/28 9/7- 27/14- 5/4- 15/8- 10/7+ 15/14+ 10/7+ 15/14+

Flo-wers choked the path; I leaned against a rock; I swooned

Viola

gl. gl. gl. 15/11- 9/8 11/8 8/7+ 7/5+ 7/6+ 3/2 18/11- II^a I^a (end of trem.) pp (use thumb) 18/11- 12/7- 40/21- 4/3 7/5 14/9

Roaring bears and howling dragons roused me Oh, the clamorous waters

Viola

(begin spic.)

32/21+
56/55

of the rapids!

molto accel.

P
A
U
S
E

I trembled in the deep forest,

Viola

32/21 ?
36/35 ?

and shuddered at the o-ver-han-ging crags, one heaped upon a - no - ther

Viola

Clouds on clouds gathered above, Threatening rain;

Viola

18/11+
11/6

7/5
9/8-

The wa - ters gushed be-low, breaking in-to mist

Viola

14/9
5/4-

8/5
14/11+

8/5
14/11+

8/5
14/11+

A peal of blas - ting thun - der!

slow glide

end spic. trem. ff \rightrightarrows *pp*

The mountains crumbled The stone gate of the hollow hea - ven Opened

IV^a III^a martellato

$\frac{2}{1}$ $\frac{2}{1}$ $\frac{2}{1}$ $\frac{2}{1}$
 $\frac{9}{7+}$ $\frac{11}{9-}$ $\frac{8}{7+}$ $\frac{12}{11+}$

wide, re - vea - ling A vas - ty realm of a - zure with - out

(end mart.) II^a I^a (begin spic.)

$\frac{10}{7}$ $\frac{11}{8}$ $\frac{15}{11}$
 $\frac{6}{5-}$ $\frac{8}{7+}$ $\frac{8}{7-}$

bot - tom, Sun and moon shining to - ge - ther on

(end spic.) *III^a II^a I^a*

Faster - Very much

gold and sil - - ver palaces Clad in rainbow and ri - ding on the wind,

(begin spic.) *III^a II^a I^a*

as suddenly soft as possible

8^{vb} 0 \rightrightarrows *ff*

The ladies of the air des-cen-ded like flower flakes The fai-ry lords trooping in

Viola

IV^a
III^a
0

27/16
21/16- 9/7- 5/4-

II^a
0

56/55-
3/2

Slower

they were thick as hemp-stalks in the fields Phoenix birds circled their ears,

Viola

(end spic.)

IV^a
III^a

glide down with
violent trem.

0 II^a

and pan - thers played up-on harps Be-wild-er-ment filled me, and ter- -ror

Viola

IV^a
III^a

10/7+
10/7+

14/11+
16/15

seized on my heart I lifted my self in a - maze - ment

Viola

I^a
II^a

IV^a
III^a

15/11-
15/11-

18/11
18/11+

5/3+
9/8

and a - las I woke and found my bed and pillow

Viola

Gone was the radiant world of gossamer So with all pleasures of life

Viola

All things pass with the east-flowing water Uh duh duh duh

Viola

duh Uh duh duh duh I leave you and go - when shall I re - turn?

Viola

trem. pp

11/6-
10/9

Let the white roe feed at will among the green crags, Let me ride and visit the

Viola

5/3+ 11/6-
10/9 8/7

(88/45) (35/18)

lovely mountains! How can I stoop ob-se-qui-ous-ly and serve the mighty

Viola

9/8- 7/6- 11/9+
5/4 5/4 5/4

ones! I stilles my soul

Viola

gl.

Poems by Li Po

H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

An Encounter in the Field (Version G)

Voice

III throughout
Came an a - mo - rous ri - der

Adapted
viola

Trampling the fa-llen flowers of the road. The dangling end of his crop

Viola

Brushes a passing carriage of five - colored clouds

Viola

The je - weled cur - tain is raised

Viola

Viola

A beau - ti ful woman smiled wi - thin

Viola

"That is my house",
pizz.

Viola

she whispers, Poin-ting to a pink house be - yond_
arco glide

Santa Rosa, August, 1931

Poems by Li Po

H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

The Intruder (Version B)

(As softly as possible)

Voice

*Il string throughout
(full bow very softly)*

Adapted viola

The grass of Yen is gro - wing green and long

Viola

While in Chin, the lea - fy mul - - be - rry branches hang low.

Viola

E - ven now, while my longing heart is breaking,

Viola

Are you thin - king, my dear, of coming back to me?

O wind of spring, you are a stranger,

Viola

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are "O wind of spring, you are a stranger,". The bottom staff is a Viola accompaniment in treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature. It features a melodic line with a long slur over the first half of the system and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the second half.

Why do you en - ter through the sil - ken curtains of my bower

Viola

The second system of the musical score also consists of two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature. The lyrics are "Why do you en - ter through the sil - ken curtains of my bower". The bottom staff is a Viola accompaniment in treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature. It features a melodic line with a long slur over the first half of the system and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the second half.

Santa Rosa, August, 1931

I am a Peach Tree (Version G)

To William Lyle Johnson

H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

Voice

I am a peach tree blossoming in a deep pit

Adapted viola

pizz. throughout
strike from left to right with forefinger

Na na — na na — na — na na na — na na na na — na na —

(strike forefinger left to right, and thumb back, on all 16th note passages)

O ah — ah Who is there I may turn to and smile?

glide *gl.*

Na na na na na na na na — na na — na —

da da da da da da da da da da da doo — *Suddenly p*

III^a
IV^a 0

I^a
II^a 0

II^a
I^a

0
0

(doo) — *(diminish to inaudibility)*

A sword with the keenest edge, Could not cut the

stream of wa - ter in twain So that it would cease to flow My thought is like the stream

and flows and follows you on for - ev - er *pp* Da — da da da

da da (etc)

(diminish to inaudibility)

Gloucester, Mass., Aug. 11, 1933

Poems by Li Po

H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

With a Man of Leisure (Version G)

Voice

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ Yonder the mountain flowers are out

pizz. throughout

Adapted viola

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ We drink to-ge-ther you and I. ① ② ③

Adapted viola

One more cup - ① ② ③ One more cup -

Adapted viola

still one more cup!

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Now I am drunk and drowsy,

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ① ② ③

down

you had bet-ter go. But come to-mo-row morning

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

if you will, with the harp!

① ② ① ② ③

sfz

glide glide

A Midnight Farewell (Version F)

Voice

Adapted viola

II^a (har) (har) (har) (har)

Viola

I^a (har) (har)

Viola

By a pale lantern under the cold moon We were drinking hea-vi-ly to - ge - ther

Viola

(shadows?)

Frightened by our orgies, a white heron Fluffed out of the river shallows

IV^a I^a

glide & trill one finger higher glide & trill glide & trill glide & trill

sf *ff*

Viola

It was mid - night

II^a (har) I^a

(without trill.) glide

extreme decres. *ppp*

Pasadena, Jan. 17, 1933

Poems by Li Po

H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

Before the cask of wine (Version F)

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each with a vocal line and a viola line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal lines, and the viola lines provide harmonic accompaniment with various techniques like glides and tremolos.

System 1:
Voice: The spring wind comes from the east and quickly passes,
Adapted viola: *I^a* glide

System 2:
Voice: Leaving faint ripples in the wine of the golden bowl
Viola: *I^a*

System 3:
Voice: The flowers fall, flake af-ter flake, my-ri-ads to-ge-ther
Viola: *I^a*

System 4:
Voice: You pretty girl, wine flushed, your ro-sy face is ro-si-er still
Viola: *II^a*, *I^a*

How long may the peach and plum trees flower by the green painted house?

Viola

The fleeting light de - ceives man, brings soon the stumbling age

Viola

ü -

col legno

Viola

Viola

Viola

Viola

IIª bow

Viola

Ta ta ta ta ta ta

Viola

col legno

Viola

Viola

Viola

Viola

Viola

Viola

IIª bow

Viola

col legno

bow IIª

col legno

Viola

bow II^a col legno

Viola

glide

Viola

Viola

Viola

Rise and dance in the wes - te - ring sun,

(this tone is hold on III string thru to the end of "avails")

f tremolo from here to end

While the urge of youthful years is yet un-sub - - dued!

Viola

p *f* *p*

What a - - vails to la - ment af - ter one's hair has turned

Viola

ff *p*

white like sil - ken threads? glide down in 2 bows

Viola

p *ff* *p*

Gloucester Mass., Aug. 7, 1933
 Dance Movement Chicago, January, 1942

On the Ship of Spice-wood (Version G, E)

H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a vocal line and an adapted viola line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 7/8. The score includes various performance instructions such as *pizz.*, *bow*, *trem.*, and *[ten.]*. The lyrics are: "My ship is built of spice-wood and has a rudder of mulan; Musicians sit at the two ends with jewelled bamboo flutes and pipes of gold What a pleasure it is, with a cask of sweet wine and singing girls beside me To drift on the wa-ter hither and hither".

Voice

Adapted viola

pizz. *bow* *trem.* My ship is built of spice-wood

trem. and has a rudder of mulan; Musicians sit at the two ends with jewelled

[ten.] bamboo flutes and pipes of gold What a pleasure it is, with a cask of sweet wine

[ten.] and singing girls beside me To drift on the wa-ter hither and hither

with the waves! I am hap-pi-er than the fairy of the air,

(trem.) pizz. bow trem.

Slightly slower

who rode on his yellow crane And free as the merman who followed the seagulls aim less ly

[ten.]

(trem.)

Faster

Now with the strokes of my ins-pired pen I shake the Five Moun-tains

(umgekehrt?)

My poem is done I laugh and my delight is vaster than the sea

tr above *sf* *tr* *sf* *tr* *tr*

Oh, deathless poetry! The songs of Chu-ping are ever glorious as the sun and moon

tr lower *tr lower* *tr lower* *tr lower* *tr lower*

sf sf sf sf sf

While the palaces and towers of the Chu kings have vanished from the hills Yea, if

tr upper *tr upper* *tr upper*

glide up and trill *(small rapid jerks down and up as indicated)*

sf sf sf sf sf

worldly fame and riches were things to last for-ev-er, The waters of the River Han would flow northwestward, too

tr glide down and trill

sf sf sf sf sf sf sf sf sf sf sf

Ho-oh ————— Ho-oh ————— Ho-oh ————— ho ho ho

bow *pizz.* *bow* *pizz.* *bow* *trem.*

Oh ————— Ah ————— ha ha ha etc. *(not loud)*

pp *trem.* *glide* *glide*

bow *pizz.*

ha ha ha etc. Oh ah! Ho-oh Ho-oh

ff

(trem.) bow trem. bow trem.

pizz. pizz.

(hold)

Ho ho ho ho ho Go-ho go go go go

bow pizz.

ho ah! ü Eu oh

(Accent beats with voice, while observing nuances, from here to end)

(gradual vowel change)

tr up (9/5)

(5 against 7)

ff Ah-ah ü ah Oh ah

(change to) (change to) (gradual)

suddenly pp

bow pizz. *tr*

(5 against 8)

(5:7) (7:11)

ah uh!

(no trill) *retard* pizz.

(no accent)

New Orleans (1931)
Pasadena, Jan. 15, 1933

Eleven Poems by Li Po

H. Partch

[Transcription: Iván González Escuder]

By the Great Wall (Version F)

Voice

He rides his white charger by the For ta lice of

Adapted viola

(3 full bows *mf*)

Viola

Gold, She wanders in dreams amid the desert cloud and sand.

Viola

It is a season of sorrow that she scarce can endure, Thinking of her soldier lover at the border fort.

Viola

The fire-flies, flitting about, swarm at her window, While the moon slowly

Viola

passes over her so li ta ry bower. The leaves of the green paulonia are tattered

glide

Viola

And the branches of the sha-tung blasted and sere.

gl.

Viola

There is not an hour but she alone unseen Weeps -

Viola

on ly to learn how fu tile all her tears are.

pizz.

Viola

pp ————— *ff*

Ah -

bow

pizz.