

# So Dawn Chromatically Descends to Day

*For voice and piano*

2018

By Kate Soper

Texts by Robert Frost and Fred Lerdahl

*For Fred Lerdahl*

## **So Dawn Chromatically Descends to Day**

### *Texts*

Here is a central source of musical emotion. We internalize the motion of pitches and chords in reaction to contextual forces in musical space. We attribute agency and causation to musical motions that violate intuitive physics and inevitability to motions that yield to musical inertia. The character of the musical motions, which is shaped also by their temporal realization, mirrors equivalent motions in the “real” physical world. We map specific musical motions onto specific emotional qualities, again in reflection of real-world equivalences.

[M]usic and language share the same evolutionary roots. [They] diverged in their most characteristic features: pitch organization in music, and word and sentence meaning in language. Poetry straddles this evolutionary divergence by projecting, through the addition to ordinary speech of metrical and timbral patterning, its common heritage with music.

Incidentally, text setting is a rich source of evidence for the interface between music and poetry.

- Fred Lerdahl, from “Two Ways in Which Music Relates to the World” (adapted Soper)

### Nothing Gold Can Stay

Nature’s first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf’s a flower;  
But only so an hour.

Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief.  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.

- Robert Frost

# So Dawn Chromatically Descends to Day

for Fred Lerdahl

Fred Lerdahl/Robert Frost

Kate Soper

**Not in time**

Voice **||** *(Spoken)* Here is a central source of musical emotion. **^**



**♩** ≈ 66 (*Pace tempo to speech*)

2 *Speak naturally*

Voice **||** **4/4** We internalize the motion of pitches and chords in reaction to contextual forces in musical space. **^**

*Pace music to speech* **^**

Pno.

*p*



4

Voice **||** We attribute agency and causation to motions that violate intuitive physics, **^** and **^**

*p*

*sf espr.*

*Ped. (l.v.)*



8

Voice **||** inevitability to motions that yield to musical inertia. **^**

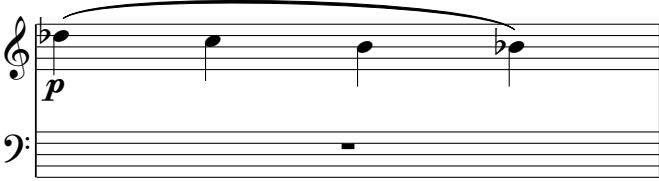
Pno.

*mp*

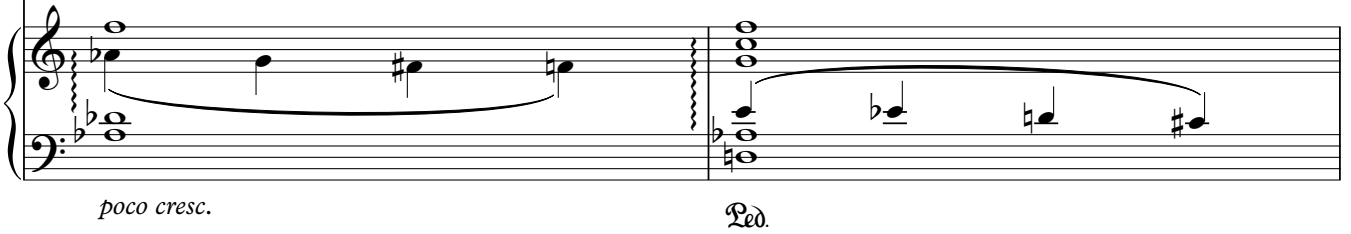
*p*

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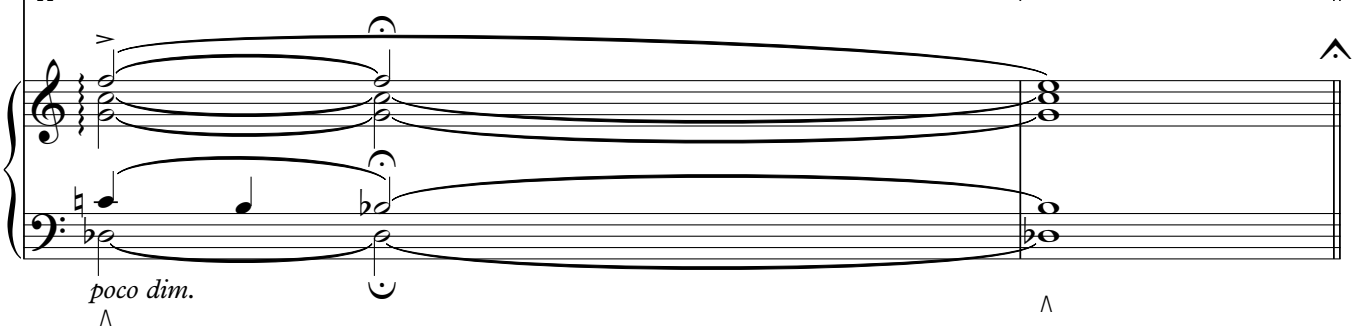
10  
Voice || The character of the musical motions, which is also shaped by their temporal realization,



12  
Voice || mirrors equivalent motions in the 'real' physical world. We map specific musical motions onto specific



14  
Voice || 7 emotional qualities, ' again in reflection of real-world equivalences.



16  
Voice || Music and language share the same evolutionary roots. They diverged in their most characteristic features:

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17

Voice: pitch organization in music, and word and sentence meaning in language.

Pno. (l.v.)

*ped. p mp \**

19

Voice: Poetry.....straddles this evolutionary divergence by projecting, through the addition to ordinary speech of

Pno. *very slow roll*

*pp ped.*

20

Voice: metrical and timbral patterning, its common heritage with music.

Pno. (l.v.)

*p pp ped. \**

**Not in time**

21

Voice: Incidentally, text setting is a rich source of evidence for the interface between music and poetry.

Pno. *repeat fast as poss. pp*

*ped. (no break in piano figure)*

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♩ = 76 Pushing ahead

23 *p* *f*

Voice

Na - ture's first green is gold,

(repeat fast as poss.) *sim.* *(l.v.)* *(l.v.)* *(l.v.)* *(l.v.)* *f*

Pno.

*(pp)* *f*

*Red.* *Λ* *Λ*

**Meno Mosso** **Poco Rit.** ♩ = 76 Pushing ahead

27 *p* *mp* *p* *p*

Voice

Her hard-est hue to hold. Her ear-ly leaf's a

Pno.

*p* *mp* *p* *pp*

*gradually clear Red.* *Λ* *Λ* *Red.*

**Meno Moss.** **Heavy** ♩ = 66

33 *mf* *port.* *mp* *p*

Voice

flow - er; But on - ly so an hour. Then

Pno.

*f* *mp* *p*

*gradually clear Red.* *Λ*

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38

Voice

leaf sub-sides to leaf. So E-den sank to grief. So dawn goes down to

Pno.

No pedal

*mp*

*mf*

*sf espr.*

*mf*

Ped. ^ ^ ^

43

Voice

day. No - thing gold can stay.

Pno.

*mp*

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

*ppp*

Rit.

Freely  $\text{♩} \approx 50$

long

Rit. Al Fin

very slow roll

8<sup>va</sup>

8<sup>vb</sup>

The MacDowell Colony  
Peterborough, NH  
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