



Jason V. Barabba

Diddling: Considered as One of the Exact Sciences

Taken from the Essay by Edgar Allan Poe
for Baritone and Piano

Diddling: Considered as One of the Exact Sciences

Movements

1. Done
2. Variations – “Hey Diddle, Diddle.”
3. Coda

Duration - Approximately 14 Minutes

...a clarification from dictionary.com

did·dle –verb (used with object),-dled, -dling.
Informal. to cheat; swindle; hoax.

Performance Notes:



In the piano part, this notation indicates a note cluster, using one hand in the approximate region of the bar of notes indicated. Exact pitches are not indicated nor should the player spend any time trying to fit the exact range indicated.

This material is covered by copyright law. Please do not duplicate without the composer's permission. Please send copies of any programs or performance notifications to jason@jasonbarabba.com.

Diddling: Considered as One of the Exact Sciences is registered with ASCAP
© 2010 – Jason V. Barabba
jason@jasonbarabba.com

A musical staff with a bass clef. The text "WWW.JASONBARABBA.COM" is written across the staff in a handwritten, cursive style.

Text adapted from the essay by Edgar Allan Poe

1. Done

Diddling- or the abstract idea conveyed by the verb to diddle- is sufficiently well understood. Yet the fact, the deed, the thing diddling, is somewhat difficult to define. We may get at a tolerably distinct conception of the matter in hand, by defining-not the thing, diddling, in itself- but man, as an animal that diddles. Had Plato but hit upon this, he would have been spared the affront of the picked chicken.

Very pertinently it was demanded of Plato, why a picked chicken, which was clearly "a biped without feathers," was not, according to his own definition, a man? But I am not to be bothered by any similar query. Man is an animal that diddles, and there is no animal that diddles but man. It will take an entire hen-coop of picked chickens to get over that.

What constitutes the principle of diddling is peculiar to the class of creatures that wear coats and pantaloons. A crow thives; a fox cheats; a weasel outwits; a man diddles. "Man was made to mourn," says the poet. But not so:- he was made to diddle. This is his aim - his object - his end. And when a man's diddled we say he's "done."

2. Variations and a Theme

Diddling, rightly considered, is a compound, of which the ingredients are minuteness, interest, perseverance, ingenuity, audacity, nonchalance, originality, impertinence, and grin.

Your diddler is audacious. He is a bold man. He carries the war into Africa. With a little more prudence Dick Turpin would have made a good diddler; with a pound or two more brains Charles the Twelfth.

He is cool as a cucumber. "Calm as a smile from Lady Bury." He is easy- easy as an old glove, or the damsels of ancient Baiae.

Your diddler is impertinent. He swaggers. He sets his arms a-kimbo. He thrusts his hands in his trousers. He sneers in your face. He treads on your corns. He eats your dinner, he drinks your wine, he borrows your money, he pulls your nose, he kicks your poodle, and he kisses your wife.

Your diddler perseveres. *Ut canis a corio nunquam absterrebitur uncto.*

Your diddler is ingenious. He invents and circumvents. Were he not Alexander he would be Diogenes. Were he not a diddler, he would be a maker of patent rat-traps or an angler for trout.

The origin of the diddle is referable to the infancy of the Human Race. Perhaps the first diddler was Adam.

3. Coda

But there is really no end to diddling, so, were I even to hint at half the variations of this science there would be no end to this essay. I must bring this paper, perforce, to a conclusion.

Please do not duplicate without the express permission of the composer.



for Scott Graff

Diddling:

Considered as One of the Exact Sciences

Excerpted from the Essay by
Edgar Allan Poe

1. Done

Jason V. Barabba
October 2010
REVISED 2/11

Baritone $\text{♩} = 84$ - Sneaky *f*

Did dl ing

Piano $\text{♩} = 84$ - Sneaky *mp* *f* *mp* *mf* *mf* *f* *p*

Light and Airy

3

4 *mf* *f* *mp*

or the ab - stract i - dea con - veyed by the word to did - dle

8 *f* *mp* *mf* *ff*

Is su - ffi cien tly well un - der - stood Yet the fact the deed the thing

12 *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

did - dl - ing ng ng is some - what di - ffi - cult to de - fine

16 *mf* *f* *mp*

We may get at a

19 *f* *mp* *f* *mp*

tol - er - a - bly dis - tinct con - cep - tion of the mat - ter at hand by

22 *f* *mp* *p*

— de - fin - ing not the thing did - dl - ing in it self

26 *f*

but man as an an - i - mal that did - dles had Pla to but hit up-on this

29 *mp* 3 *f* *mp* *mf* 3 *p*

he would have been spared the af-front of the picked chick en Ver - y pert-i-nent ly

mf *mp* *f* *p* *espress.*

35 *espress.* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

It was de - man-ded of Pla-to why A picked chick-en

mp *mf* *f* *mf*

40 *mf*

which was clear - ly a bi - ped with - out

mp

43 *f* *mf*

fea - - - thers was not a -

mf

46

ccor- ding to his own_ de-fi- ni - tion_ a man_ But, I am not to

mp *p* *mf* *mp*

50

be bo-thered by an- y si mi lar - que-ry_ Man is an

p *p* *f* *ff* *mf*

56

an-i- mal that did - dles_ and there is_ no an- i mal that did - dles but man_

ff *mf*

62

It will take an en- tire hen coop of picked chickens to get o- ver that

mp *p* *mf* *f*

Allegro (Approx. ♩=120)

68 *ff* *f*

What con-si tutes the

mp *ff* *f* *mf* *f*

73 *ff* *mp* *mf* *f*

prin-ci ple of did-dl ing is pe-cu - liar to the class of crea-tures that wear coats and pan-ta - loons_____

mf *p* *mf* *ff* *mf* *f*

78 *mf* < *f* *mf* < *f*

a crow thievs a fox cheats

ff *mf* *f* *ff* *mf* *ff*

83 *mf* *f* *ff* *mf* *fff*

a wea-sel_ out - wits a man_____

mf *ff* *mf* *f*

87 *mp* Slower/Easy/Assured (Approx ♩=80) *mf*

did dles "Man was made to

8^{va}-----] Slower/Easy/Assured (Approx ♩=80) Floating

p *mp* *mf*

91 *pp* *f* *mp*

mourn" says the po - et but not so

8^{va}-----] 8^{va}-----]

ppp *mf*

97 *<mf>* *f* *p*

He was made to did-dle This is his aim his ob-ject his end

8^{va}-----]

pp *mp* *pp*

104 *mf* *mp* *mf*

thus when a

p *mf* *f* *p* *ff* *mf* *p*

108

man is didd - led we say he's_ done.

2. Variations - "Hey Diddle, Diddle"

Variation 6 - "Introduction"

Allegro (Approx ♩ = 116)

Did - dl - ing

Avoid accenting any beats in this variation.

116 *mp*

right - ly con - si - dered is a com - pound

119 *mp*

of which

123 *f*

the in - gre - di - ents are mi -

127 *mf* *f*

- - nute - ness in - ter - est per - se - ver - ence

131 *mf* *f* *ff* *mp*

in - gen - u - i - ty au - - - da - ci - ty

135 *mp*

non - cha - lance

139 *f*

o - ri - gi - nal - i - ty

143

mf

mp

im - per - ti - - - nence

146

f

and

grin

f

Variation 5 "Audacity"

Prestissimo (Approx $\text{♩} = 168$)

150

Prestissimo (Approx $\text{♩} = 168$)

p

f

p

f

Freely

157

Your did-dler is

3

au - da - cious

he is a bold man

he car -

mf